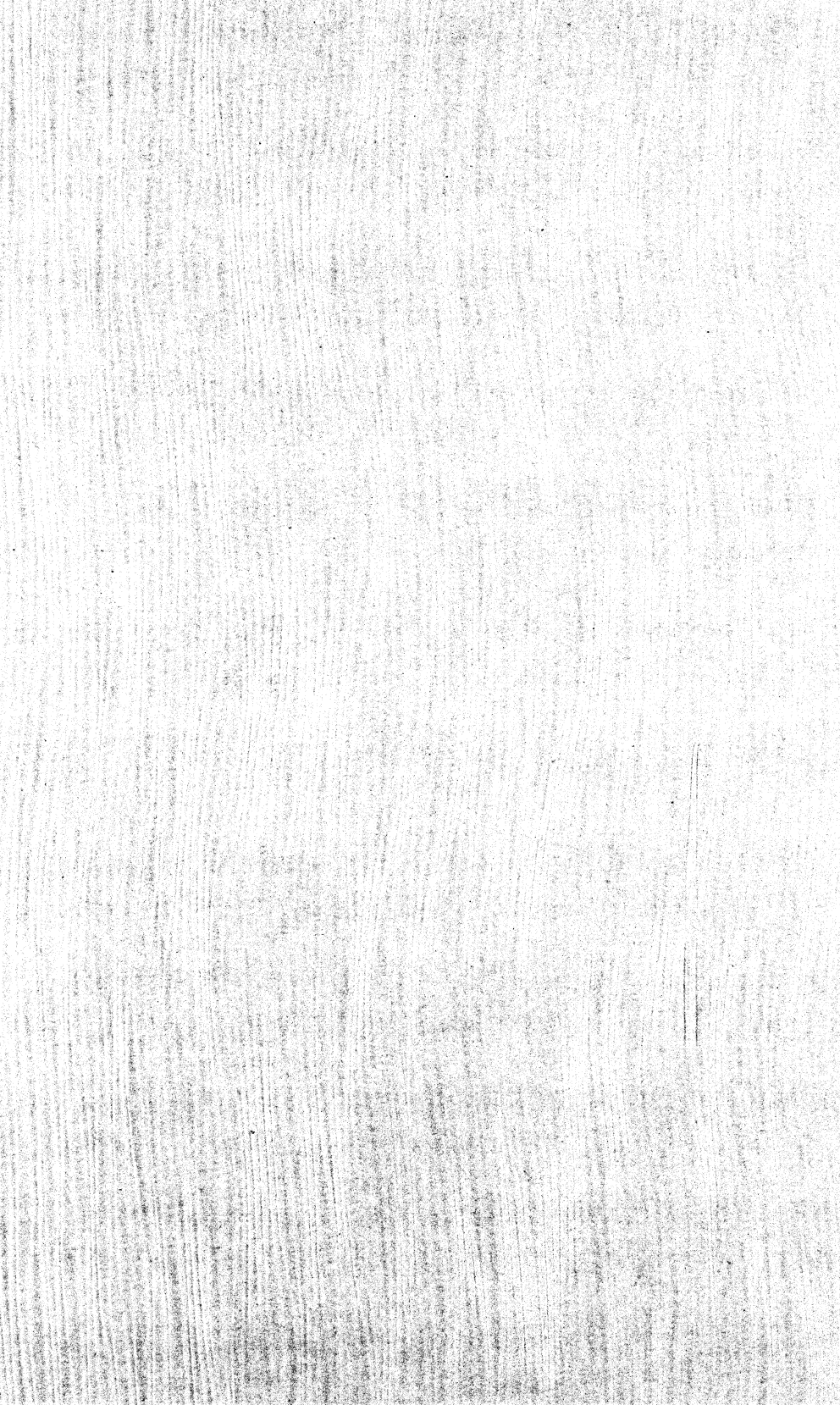


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**PIONEER HISTORY  
OF  
HURON COUNTY  
MICHIGAN**

**BY  
FLORENCE MCKINNON GWINN**

**HURON COUNTY PIONEER AND  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
1922**





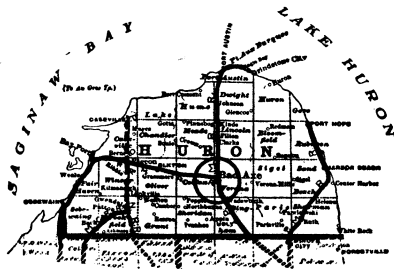






MRS. FLORENCE McKINNON GWINN

Secretary of the Huron County Pioneer and  
Historical Society, and Author of this  
Pioneer History of the County



1922



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## PREFACE

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The Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society authorized its secretary, Mrs. Richard Gwinn, to secure facts and publish a history of the early settlements of Huron County, its resources and prospects, so that the coming generations may know something of the struggles and privations of the early settlers.

In sending forth this description of Huron County, its history, topography and possibilities, we have availed ourselves of the most reliable sources of information within our reach.

Most of the historic material has been secured from original documents, manuscripts, papers, journals, talks by men who are now deceased and reports from the Michigan Historical collections.

The writer wishes to thank W. H. Wallace, S. Wallace and Chas. Crawford for the loan of early papers published in the county. These contained valuable data and information. To those desiring information this little volume will contain much that is instructive as well as entertaining and valuable.

FLORENCE MCKINNON GWINN.



## CHAPTER I

# Early Beginnings in Huron County

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## SETTLEMENTS AND SETTLERS

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BEFORE we begin the study of the facts connected with the early history of Huron County, let us glance briefly at some of the physical features of Michigan, which are so intimately related to the soil formation of this section. For ages what is now Michigan was almost entirely covered by a great inland sea.

In the Lower Peninsula by drilling into the underlying rock for hundreds of feet there has been found layer after layer of soft rock formed by the detritus brought into the old inland sea by its rivers. Part of the time this sea had no outlet and was salty. This accounts for the layers of salt which are found in so many places in the Saginaw Valley. Much later this sea disappeared and the present Great Lakes were only river valleys.

Then still later came the great glacier periods which cover a great space of time. As these glaciers moved forward with slow but irresistible force they gouged out boulders from the rock, grinding them into smaller pieces, forming gravel, sand and clay. When the last great glacier had receded far enough to allow the water to pass out to the ocean the temporary lakes disappeared but left the present Great Lakes of which Saginaw Bay is a part. This bay has a coast line of several hundred miles in length and its shores lie 580 feet above the ocean's level. (I) The land bordering its

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(I) History of Bay County.

waters is generally low and sandy. In many places swamps surrounded by sand ridges are to be found. In the southern and central parts of the county the land is hilly and rolling. With few exceptions the soil is formed largely of lake drift and is very fertile.

The early explorers followed the shores of the bay and the sand ridges found there naturally gave the impression that all of the land was of this type and therefore worthless. Even as eminent an authority as Governor Cass states in a letter that "the country in the angle between Fort Gratiot, (now Port Huron) and Saginaw Bay can never be of any importance." He was referring to the "Thumb" which now has some of the finest farming land in the state. (2) The Morse Geographies then used in the schools made similar statements, declaring the interior of Michigan an impenetrable swamp. What land there was between the swamps was barren sand and that it was not worth the expense of surveying. Such declarations naturally impeded the settlement of this section for many years.

### THE FIRST PEOPLE WERE TRAPPERS

The first people who came into the country other than the Indians were trappers and shingle weavers. Then later came the lumbermen who founded small settlements to carry on their various enterprises. Still later men of energy and courage with their families sought a home in this region that was without roads and with but few acres of tillable land and with impassable swamps and streams in many places. They laid broad and solid the foundations of a progressive civilization while they lived in log shanties, cabins and houses the latch-strings of which were always out. They were ever ready to assist other settlers in getting a start and in cases of sickness their services were freely given. The adventures and hardships of these pioneer settlers

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(2) Michigan Historical Collection.

were many and varied. Some one has truly said, "That the pioneer was a child of progress. He looked up and not down; forward and not back. Behind him was the past; before him the future. His visions were of tomorrow. He foresaw hard work and hard times, blue days and weary nights, but he saw too in the dim future the town, the city, the county, the state, the schools for his children, the churches and fertile fields yielding their treasures of grain. And of these things he was to be a part and parcel."

Before the white man took possession of this section great stands of white pine covered the larger portion of what is now Huron County. There are about 80 varieties of trees native to Michigan and a large majority of these were to be found in this region. There were the white and Norway pine, spruce, cedar, hard and soft maple, smooth and shag bark hickory, tamarac, birch, hemlock, basswood, white and black ash, elm, oak, beech and numerous other kinds of the cone-bearing evergreen trees as well as the various varieties of deciduous trees that shed their leaves in the fall.

Besides these forests there were in many places great stretches of marshes and swamps with a dense growth of cedar and tamarac. As a rule the oak and hard wood were to be found upon the heavy clay soil; on the sandy soil the pine, hemlock and also groves of oaks. Beautiful shrubs, many of which have almost disappeared, covered the open spaces in the woods.

Along the shores of the Bay and rivers many kinds of wild fruit were found growing, such as plums, grapes, wild crab apples, red and black raspberries, strawberries and on the sand plains an abundance of huckleberries. To add to the beauty of the scene in many places were the wild flowers each in their season. The violets, trilliums, honeysuckles, lady slippers, the wild rose and the sweet scented trailing arbutus. Deep forests, open woods, prairies, swamps, the rivers and bay afforded

havens for the great variety of animal life found in this portion of Michigan. The waters of the bay teemed with fish and in the woods roamed the moose, deer, elk, bear, wolf, wild cat, lynx, and along the rivers were found the beaver, otter, muskrat and mink. Wild berries, seeds, insects furnished daily food for the bird life. On a spring morning the woods resounded with the music of these feathered songsters. Great flocks of wild pigeons used to almost darken the sky as they passed in their onward flight. Now that particular kind of pigeon is extinct. In 1868 men in the town of Sebewaing caught 16 barrels of these pigeons and sent them to the New York markets. The early settlers used to knock them down with long poles when their ammunition gave out. It was also a common sight to see flocks of wild turkeys in the woods, especially in the fall of the year. As late as 1875 the Anderson brothers in Caseville township, captured 10 or 11 turkeys just where the Grand Trunk Railway now crosses their land.

#### ORIGIN OF NAME "HURON"

We find that Huron County was set off in 1840 and organized in 1860. It is situated in latitude 43 degrees north on the west side of Lake Huron and east of Saginaw Bay, being surrounded, as will be seen by reference to the map, by water on three sides, which has a medial effect upon its climate both as to heat and cold. It contains about 553,000 acres of land, mostly rolling with no abrupt hills.

The name Huron was derived from the word "hures" as used in the phrase "Inelles hures" (what heads) as applied by an astonished French traveler to the Wyandotte or Huron Indians on beholding their fantastic mode of dressing the hair. These Indians were dispersed by the Iroquois in 1649. (4).

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(4) Michigan Historical Collections.

We find an interesting series of maps published in the Michigan Historical Magazine of July, 1918 which show the various names given to the territory now included in Huron County. The map of 1822 shows nearly one-third of the Lower Peninsula including the "Thumb" district, in Oakland County, which was set off in 1819 by a proclamation of Governor Cass with the addition of the lands acquired under the Indian treaty of Saginaw that same year. In 1828 St. Clair occupied the part that is now Huron County and also extended a considerable distance south of the present boundary line. In 1836 the "Thumb" is named Lapeer, and again in 1840 it is once more on the map as St. Clair, with only four counties bordering Lakes Huron and St. Clair. The other three counties were Macomb, Wayne and Monroe. In the maps of 1852-56 the territory is named Sanilac. Finally the map is given in 1860 of Huron County as it is today.

The principal rivers are the Cass, Pigeon, Pinnebog and Du Fill, or Sebewaing, as it is now called. Willow Creek also flows through a large portion of the eastern part of the county.

The soil being drift, composed of a mixture of clay, sand and gravel, is exceedingly well adapted to the growth of plants and fruit as well as the various grains. It is easily tilled, holds the moisture well and yet is sufficiently porous to allow proper drainage.

The land over which the Indian once roamed has now become the cultivated fields or is occupied by business houses, dwellings, churches and schools. To learn the story of those days of yore one has to delve into musty records and manuscripts of bygone years, for the actual pioneers, the first settlers of the county are rapidly passing away and with them we lose much of the history of the past and which it is important to preserve.

The homes of the settlers were built amid the stately old forest trees. Small spaces were cleared for

crops and the stroke of the axe and the crash of the falling timber echoed through the forest aisles. Progress was slow but steady. Every blow counted for improvement and stimulated hope and courage. The staff of life was generally coarsely ground Indian meal and lucky the family which had enough of it. Had it not been for the abundance of game many would have gone hungry. Men came into this county in many cases with nothing to aid them but courageous hearts and strong and willing hands. A hearty hospitality prevailed and the advent of a new family to settle in their midst was an occasion of rejoicing. Willing hands helped the newcomer build his cabin home and it was a common thing to exchange work in chopping and logging bees. The privations and sacrifices which necessarily come of such undertakings were bravely met and endured. Among the obstacles to be contended with was the journeys to and from civilization. The routes lay through a wild and rough country. Swamps and marshes were crossed with difficulty. Long and weary days of travel were endured to obtain even the scantiest fare. It was impossible for the first settlers to support their families by agriculture for the first few years and in this emergency the lumber camps and saw mills assisted in providing a livelihood for these people. Such was life in Huron County in the 50's and 60's.

We look back to the old times as hard times; and so they were. Full hearts and empty purses, hard work and plenty of it, shivering ague and wasting fever were the common lot of our early settlers, yet they had their share of good times too. The different schools of medicine let the pioneer kindly alone, said Governor Bagley at the first historical meeting in Michigan. The boneset and wormwood, pennyroyal and catnip that hung in every cabin were the drugs. The fashion plates did not reach the woods in that day and Jane's bonnet and Charley's coat were worn regardless of style. Questions that worry today never troubled the pioneer. Long before the advent of the white man we are told the Indians

would congregate in large parties along the shores of the lake and bay in the spring time to make maple sugar, which was taken later on and sold in Detroit.

### THE FIRST WHITE MAN ON THE SHORE

The first white man we have any record of traveling around the shores of Saginaw and Wild Fowl Bays is Edward Petit, whose history is given by Mrs. B. C. Farrand in her sketch of St. Clair County in 1872. She states that Edward Petit was the first white child born in what is now Port Huron on February 7, 1813, in a log house built by his father near the foot of Court street. The chief amusements of Edward's boyhood days were those of the Indian, hunting and fishing. The Indians were very numerous and from them he learned the language. He was well fitted for his trade among them in later years. He began this work when only 15 years of age near the Sauble.

Mr. Petit had a post on the bend of the Cass river when in the employ of G. and W. Williams. On one occasion special interest had been awakened by the failure of all the traders to find an encampment of five or six families of Indians who had been gone all winter and must necessarily have great quantities of furs. Party after party went out and returned without finding them. The head of the camp was Tawas, a cunning old fellow. Young Petit resolved to secure this prize if perseverance would accomplish it, and started out with provisions on his back for a week, together with articles for barter. He took with him as guide an Indian with one arm. The two started off and passed over to where Shebeyonk was situated. Here the Williams company had established an out post for furs in 1829, under the management of

Indian women. (4) Leaving this post they followed along the shores of bay and lake until they reached the present site of White Rock. Here they camped after building a bark lodge. Before morning a drenching rain set in and they had only one loaf of bread left. This, however, did not prevent them from renewing their search which was rewarded after a tramp of five miles. (5).

Tawas and his families were preparing to make maple sugar when they found them. These Indians had kettles of brass of all sizes which had been given them by the British Government. Undoubtedly it was one of these kettles that Robert Morse, of Bad Axe, found some years ago under an overturned root of a large tree on his father's farm in McKinley township. In the 50's, William Handy, digging out the basement of a house for William Rattle in Caseville, also found one of these kettles which his wife used for many years.

These Indians had selected this location where Mr. Petit found them for its fishing facilities. They were in almost a starving condition, having no food other than some moose tallow. Petit divided his loaf with them and purchased 500 martin skins for \$1 each, which readily sold at \$2. He could only take the best furs leaving the coarse ones for some other trader. On returning to the post on the bend of the Cass, Mr. Petit's employers quadrupled his wages. This incident occurred in 1831.

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(4) The Fur Trader, page 139.

(5) Michigan Historical Collections.

## CHAPTER II

## Huron County's Earliest Settlers

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Of the men who came into the county later we shall speak as we give the history of the various townships of the county. Huron being one of the earliest organized and embraced nearly all of the territory of Huron County. Many years before any permanent settlement was formed the present site of the village of Huron City was occupied by fishermen. In 1837 Theodore Luce erected a saw mill on Willow Creek, the Indian name of which is Wet-to-bee-wok. Later Mr. Brakeman, of Port Huron bought the mill and after operating a year or two sold it to Dowling & Forbes, also of Port Huron, and they in 1856 sold to R. B. Hubbard & Co. This firm continued operations here until the fire of 1871 destroyed their mills, docks, store and the entire village. The loss to the company was a very heavy one. Their large warehouse on shore and another one on the dock filled with grain and lumbering supplies, the entire stock of clear lumber for the year, a large quantity of shingles, tan bark and cedar posts were entirely destroyed. Immediately after the fire the firm rebuilt and continued their business until 1878, when R. B. and Watson retired from the company leaving Langdon Hubbard the sole owner of this immense business. The forest fires of '71 found the township an almost unbroken forest of very heavy timber, principally pine, hemlock, beech and maple with scattering cedar, black ash, elm and bass wood. In that fire most of the timber was killed and in the course of a few years fell in such dense masses that it was almost impossible for man or beast to pass through it. In fact fences were unnecessary except

along the roads. When the fires of 1881 came along this timber was in prime condition for the great fire which in its march swept everything before it. Langdon Hubbard alone lost \$250,000 in this conflagration. But Mr. Hubbard, with his accustomed energy set to work, immediately rebuilt his store and also a flouring mill, saw mill, shingle mill, blacksmith shop and several other business enterprises of the village besides giving his attention to farming.

### THE BEGINNING OF HURON CITY

Prof. William Lyon Phelps gave a splendid history of this well known pioneer in the memorial services held in his honor at Huron City a few years ago. He said: "The history of this town is simply a history of his life for 40 years. He built a road straight through the forest for 16 miles to Verona. His lumber business grew to gigantic proportions. Hundreds of men were in his employ. They cut timber in the winter, floated the logs down Willow Creek, sawed them into lumber, placed it on Mr. Hubbard's cars and took it to the end of the pier where it was loaded on his boat, the 'Huron City' and sent it to Detroit, Cleveland and Sandusky." Mr. Hubbard first bought land in the county in 1853. Among the men who came to Huron City in the '50's was Dr. Dickinson, who worked as a lumberman for two years for Mr. Brakeman. When the Civil War broke out in '61 he enlisted. At the close of that struggle he entered a medical college in Cincinnati from which he graduated and again became an inhabitant of Huron County.

The name of Andrew Shaw is a familiar one to all pioneers. He came in 1850 and in 1858 bought 109 acres of government land. Was appointed keeper of the light house by President Lincoln and at his death was the oldest settler in Huron township. The first life saving station was at Huron City in 1876. Five of the captains who had charge there are well known through-

out the county: Kiah, Morgan, Ferris and Oliver. Captain Kiah's story of the attempted rescue in April 1880, of the scow Sally McGruder, when the entire crew of the life savers lost their lives but him, is as thrilling as any sea story ever published.

About three miles east of Grindstone City was the now vanished hamlet of New River. Here on May 12, 1845 J. Spikeman and Walter Hume bought some land. Other men who came there in the 50's were J. R. Chambers 1851, John Ginn 1853, Francis Palms, 1854, S. Sharpstein 1855, Thomas Donahue 1856, and Alexander Miller in 1858. Here Cooper, Creevy & Co. used to operate an extensive salt block, their headquarters being at Port Austin. The first deed recorded in the county of which we have any trace is a conveyance from Lorenz M. Mason to the County of Huron. It is for a consideration of \$175 and describes what is now known as the New River Cemetery, consisting of four acres and described as being the burying ground now in use in the said township of Huron. I think the record was made by Charles B. Cottrell. Where the village stood is now the farm of Frank Kinch, one of the most enterprising and modern farmers of the Thumb. As late as 1883 this town had a long dock where steamers regularly stopped for freight and passengers. Had a store, church and school house. When the salt industry declined the town began to go down. Finally every vestige of what had been a flourishing town disappeared. The soil in this township is a clay loam with a mixture of sand and is very fertile.

### SAND BEACH TOWNSHIP

An interesting page in the countys history is the story of the early settlement of Sand Beach township. Steps were taken to organize this township as early as 1853. The first town meeting was held near Port Hope in a private house and Hiram Whitcomb elected super-

visor in the spring of 1853, but he objected to assuming control over such a large territory, so the town was not really organized until 1855 when John Hopson was elected supervisor. He was instrumental in getting the first state road. The name given to the bay and beach in those early days was on account of the fine, wide, clean beach so free from rock ledge at this point. The shore below for some distance is rocky. Upon the organization of the township G. W. Pack, of the firm of Carrington, Pack & Co., who did business here, suggested that the same name be given to it. The name gave the impression that the general character of the soil was sandy and therefore valueless, so in later years the village was renamed Harbor Beach.

#### FIRST COUNTY SEAT AT SAND BEACH

Upon the organization of the county in 1859 Sand Beach was made the county seat. It remained so until 1864 when the court house burned with nearly all the records. One term of court was held in the Dow House, after the fire, and then the capital was moved to Port Austin. The first settler was John Allen in the spring of 1837 and with him came Alanson Daggett. The fishermen, however, had visited this point at an early day to catch the white fish and trout with which the clear waters of the lake abound. Mr. Allen and Mr. Daggett put up a saw mill at Rock Falls and in the fall of that same year Bela Hubbard, of Detroit, tells of a trip he made here in connection with the Michigan Geological Expedition from Detroit to Port Huron. Dr. Houghton, State Geologist, and C. C. Douglass with a guide, Pierre Guret, of French and Indian blood and a dog being the rest of the party. Mr. Hubbard states that they were to examine and report upon the salt springs of the lower peninsula. Prior to the settlement of Michigan by white men the Indians supplied themselves with salt from the saline springs of the Saginaw Valley and the Huron Peninsula. The state being desirous of knowing more

about these springs sent out this party into the wilderness far from the habitation of white men. They had completed the river explorations after many difficulties and reached the point where Saginaw now is in October 1837. Mr. Hubbard says: "We then prepared for an expedition which was attended with some danger at that late season of the year, a lake journey of 150 miles from Saginaw to Port Huron. We procured a canoe from the Chippewa reservation. It was a dugout of wood 30 feet long, but so narrow, that seated in a line of the center we could use a paddle on either side." Bay City was then an infant of one year and boasted a frame building used as a chapel and two or more log huts." He also mentions finding apple trees along the Tittabawassee river. An old manuscript mentions the planting of these when Father Marquette and his Jesuit brethren paddled around our beautiful peninsula 200 years before, dropping here and there a few apple and pear seeds from which the earliest settlers were to gather fruit. Some of these trees were found in Caseville township in 1841. No doubt these warriors of the Cross camped there over night. When the party reached the islands near the Au Gres river they caught a large sturgeon with their hands and threw it on the shore. It stocked their larder for many days with its variety of meat.

Mr. Hubbard says: "Of our further voyaging until we rounded Pointe Aux Barques I have nothing to note beyond the usual adventures and delays that attend mariners on so perilous a trip in such a tiny craft upon the treacherous waves of Saginaw Bay. The toils of the day were compensated by the sweetest of slumbers when after having supped upon pork and hard bread, each wrapped in his blanket, we fell asleep beneath the soft influence of the Pleiades."

He also gives the following description of the coast in that day: "It is rock bound affording no harbor and being thickly wooded with evergreens its aspect was forbidding and gloomy. Added to this the waves are

incessantly lashing the rocks whether the wind be from the lake or bay. This action of the winds has caused channels to be worn through large masses of the movable sand stone which tumbles into the lake from small islets. In the immense caverns formed by the constant action of the restless waters a fleet of skiffs might be safely hidden. In doubling the cape the voyager is struck with the singular appearance of two projecting masses detached from the main and covered with timber. They bear close resemblance to the bows of vessels with hulls exposed down to the keel. The bowsprit and sides are nearly perfect. They are about 50 feet in the beam and 16 to 20 feet in height." (4).

The name the French voyagers bestowed upon it at an early date is significant of the mimic resemblance, Pointe Aux Barques. This point was first settled by Jonathan G. Stockman. He came from Cleveland with his wife and six children and engaged in the fishing industry. The next settler was Henry Gill who landed at Burnt Cabin Point, July 4, 1852. When a resort started at Pointe Aux Barques it was made a township, 700 acres being taken from Port Austin for that purpose.

But to continue the story of Mr. Hubbard and his party. Near White Rock, on Lake Huron, they found a settler or rather a lumber man, the first they had seen since leaving the Saginaw reservation. John Allen had been there for three months. He and five other men had erected a saw mill on a dashing little brook that nearly swamped their canoe on entering the stream. He had no neighbors but the mistress of the house informed them that they were expecting families to come and settle in the then visionary White Rock City. The annals of this place constitute one of those chapters of romance of which the records of 1835 and 1836 are so replete. (5).

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(4) Michigan Historical Collections.

(5) Huron County Album.

Maps had been displayed in Detroit and other places depicting a magnificent harbor into which steamboats were entering. Pictures of saw mills, court house, churches and other public buildings were shown. And as a result lots were sold at fabulous prices to buyers and the rage of real estate speculation was at its height. Mr. Hubbard states that even those lines of advancing civilization—the surveyors marks were lacking. Except Mr. Allen, it was 40 miles to the nearest inhabitant. The party carved their names on the large beech tree for the benefit of future visitors as the first guests of the advertised White Rock hotel. Mr. Allen later sold out to Mr. Robinson and he to Hiram Whitcomb in 1845. The creek still bears the name of Allen's Creek.

In an interview with John Hopson three weeks before he died he made the following statements to Mrs. Dow of Sand Beach: "I came to Rock Falls, or Barnettville as it was then named in 1847. The trip was made in a skiff owned by Lyman French and a Mr. McDonald. They started from Port Huron and every night would camp on the beach resuming their journey in the morning if the weather would permit."

On one of his early trips Mr. Hopson brought with him a yoke of steers and a wagon. This was the first wagon to enter Sand Beach, now Harbor Beach. This town is situated on Magnet Bay. The ground upon which the village stands is high and level. At a distance of about one-fourth of a mile from the shore there is an abrupt descent of about 20 feet, below which is a beautiful plateau extending to the lake.

Mrs. Ludington, the first white woman in Sand Beach township states that Mr. Ludington and herself came to Rock Falls, then Allen's Creek. In order to find a suitable location for their home Mr. Ludington explored the shore with a small row boat until he reached the point where Harbor Beach now is. The beautiful white sand of the beach attracted his eye and he decided

to locate there. Their first child, Almont A., was born here in 1851. At Allen's Creek were their nearest neighbors, Dr. Cutler, Hiram Whitcomb, Mr. Allen and Alason Daggett. Mr. Ludington built a frame house in 1854 just west of where the depot now is. They moved from here in 1857 to Center Harbor where they lived seven years. This town was first known as Jerry's Mill. The firm of Leuty, Durant & Co., of Lexington purchased the mill and premises with a large tract of valuable pine land in 1864. They also built a fine dock, several buildings, including a boarding house and dwelling house, for Mr. H. H. Ostertrout, their agent and fireman. The first wedding in Sand Beach township was that of Duncan McCash and Mary Ann French. Levi H. Buell officiated. Date, April 19, 1852. The daughter of Mr. Buell is now Mrs. Banker, of Harbor Beach. Sand Beach dates its first settlement to 1837, but no improvements were made then. In 1868 its population was 200. At the present date Hunting Trescott is its oldest resident. In those early times Hiram Whitcomb was a leading man in the settlement. His neighbors were the lumbermen and their families. An interesting character of those days was a man whose name still clings to the point below Harbor Beach resort. His ostensible business was fishing but his real business was coining counterfeit Mexican dollars. Then he began engraving bank notes. Mr. Whitcomb told him that this fact had become known to the people. At first he denied it, but later made a full confession and said that he had been at one time an employee in the Philadelphia mint. He left the country soon afterward. The old die he used was at one time in H. W. Chamberlains store.

The first railway train came into Sand Beach in 1880. Mr. Gilchrist and Dr. Cutler, the father of Dean Cutler, of Bad Axe, organized the first Sunday school in 1852. The first church built in the town was the Baptist. It was also the first of that denomination in the county. Before that time traveling M. E. preachers had

held services in the settlement. The first M. E. church was erected in 1878 under the pastorate of Robert Bird.

Little is known of the early history of the Catholic church in Sand Beach. In 1866 Father Klug made visits to the few Catholic families there. A Free Methodist church was organized in 1879 with seven members. The Evangelical Lutheran people had Rev. Mr. Schwarz as supply in 1872. The Presbyterians were cared for by Rev. E. Davis in 1880. In 1854 Mr. Burleigh, who came to a place named Purdyville, just below Band Beach, gives this description of the dwellings in that day: "The log cabins had clay floors. The settlers had no nails, so used poles to bind the shakes on the roofs of their dwellings. The window casings were made of pine, split with a frow, and kept in place by wooden pins. They had tallow candles for lights and jumpers, a roughly constructed sled about 8 feet in length, were the only vehicles used then for travel, both summer and winter. The maple trees in that vicinity had been tapped by the Indians for so many years that the marks were far above a man's head. The Indians used the bow and arrow to kill the deer. They had no difficulty in doing so.

The first school was organized in 1852 and E. B. Ward, of Detroit, contributed the land on which the school house was built. Alonzo Trescott (son of Hunting Trescott) was the first teacher.

Another name associated with that of Sand Beach is that of John Brennan, who has lived there 44 years. He contributed a very interesting paper on the early history of the town to the Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society a couple of years ago. In it he states that: "Sand Beach was the home of the first real settler as many of those coming first were lumbermen. Here was erected the first steam saw mill by John Hopson. Here was located the first bank. In the natural course of events as the familiar scenes of pioneer days began to disappear and the whole county to show signs of an

order of things obliterating the past the government harbor was erected with its broad entrance and the light house as if to mark the pioneer gateway of the county.

The next one of the pioneers of prominence was Jeremiah Jenks, who in 1864 with J. L. Woods and George W. Pack purchased a saw mill on Allen's Creek. This structure had been built on the site of the first saw mill on the eastern side of the county. During the 11 years following they produced over 50,000,000 feet of pine lumber for the outside market. B. W. Jenks was the clerk and bookkeeper for the firm in 1866. He afterwards became one of the partners. Another settler, Jesse L. Jenks, came into the township in 1870 when he had control of a stage route between Port Sanilac and Port Austin. In 1856 we find Hunting Trescott assisting in the construction of a mill at Center Harbor for Mr. J. Jenks.

Among the early newspapers of the county was the Huron County News, published at Sand Beach from '62 to '64 by O. F. Harrington. This paper followed the county seat to Port Austin, where in 1871 it finally passed into the hands of W. F. Clark.

The work on the Harbor of Refuge at Sand Beach was begun in 1873 but a number of years elapsed before it was completed. Up to 1883 the largest number of vessels at one time seeking shelter from the storms was 89. Capt. Robert Wagstaff was appointed custodian of the harbor in 1882 and held that position until ill health compelled him to resign in 1898. He was well fitted for the position, having made a trip around the world and crossed the ocean nine times. Capt. W. S. Rice was his successor. The life saving station was constructed and went into commission during the year 1881 with Keeper D. E. Dues and G. W. Plough in charge. Another name on the records of that early day was Andrew Maule, whose grand-daughter, Mrs. Nathan Case, is now a resident of Sand Beach township. He took the first load

of provisions to where the city of Bad Axe now stands. The food was for the early surveyors. About four miles from that place the oxen were mired and they had great difficulty in rescuing them and getting the provisions to the camp which was on the site of the present court house. In the night they had to drive away the bears which were after the barrel of pork. Much more could be said of this thriving city but space will not permit.

### PORT AUSTIN TOWNSHIP

Another of the early settled townships was Port Austin, although it was not organized until 1862 with Isaac Brebner as supervisor. The first settlement here was made by Jedushu Bird, who came from Canada at the time of the Rebellion of 1837 in a small sail boat. With him were his wife and two sons, Ben and Alden. Mr. Bird built his home on the site of the present Macabee hall. Half a mile from the mouth of the creek which bears his name he built a dam and a water mill. The remains of this may be seen today. Besides the manufacture of lumber Mr. Bird carried on a fishing business. He built a small dock at the mouth of the creek and also made a rude shanty further up the stream. These were the only dwellings when John Buttars, to whom we are indebted for this sketch, came to what is now Port Austin in 1852.

Mr. Bird sold out to Smith, Austin & Dwight in 1853 and they built a large steam mill at the mouth of the creek. James Dufty assisted in this work. In the winter of 1853-4 a lumber dock was constructed and the mill began operations in 1854. The name of the town was changed from Bird's Creek to Dwightville and still later to Port Austin in honor of Mr. Austin, the second partner of the firm. They did not make a success of the business, however, and it went into the hands of a receiver, Mr. William Warner, who sold it to G. and W. F. Smith. In 1859 they sold out to Ayres, Learned & Wis-

wall, who operated the mill until the supply of timber was exhausted.

We find this item in a paper of that day: "Ayres & Co., have shipped this week 284,644 feet of lumber and 2,638 barrels of salt to Sandusky, Ohio." The first salt well in the county was sunk at Port Austin in 1864 and brine was struck at a depth of 1184 feet. The salt made here took the first prize at the state fair in Ohio and was considered the finest made in Michigan.

An early settler in the town was Mr. J. Kimball, who came in 1852. He built one of the first houses in Port Austin. He chopped a trail from there to Huron City in order to get mail through once a week. He then hired Jacob M. Groat to carry it from Forestville. Mr. Groat walked the 44 miles both ways following a trail. When the telegraph came in 1865 the inhabitants of Port Austin thought they were surely "out of the woods." Mrs. Case, the daughter of Mr. Kimball, tells of picking berries in those early days and trading them for beefsteak when the steamers came into port.

The first real farmer was Samuel Doax. He cleared and cultivated part of the land now belonging to Mrs. Con. Culhane's farm, two miles south of the village. The first resident Protestant minister was Rev. Mr. Black a Baptist who made his home with Mr. Kimball. A paper, entitled "The Huron County Reporter", was owned and edited by D. R. Joslin. It is said to have been the first paper in the county. It was discontinued about the year 1862 and a few years later The Huron County News took its place. The first school house is still standing and is part of the dwelling house of Jay Smith. Its former site being near the present post office. Miss Emma Smith was the first teacher.

Among the first settlers who came to Port Austin and helped build up the town and surrounding country we find these names: Capt. Henry Gill, John and Esther Butters, Capt. Chas. McDonald, William Nash, Peter

Buchkowski, Fred Empkie, Thomas Morrow, Mark Carrington, J. W. Kimball, Mrs. Carroll, Archie Smith, Mrs. Copeland, George Gereau, Mrs. M. Sturtevant, Jennie Sinclair and James Dufty. All of these mentioned were pioneers of the fifties. In this necessarily brief sketch it is impossible to name all of those who came early in the '60's. In order to give some idea of the transportation of that day we quote the following items from The Huron County News of 1866:

"The barge Ocean arrived here last week with a cargo of merchandise, brick, 70 tons of hay and 3,000 bushels of corn for Messrs. Ayres, Learned & Wiswall. She took on 200,000 feet of lumber on Monday and will finish loading this week. Two weeks before this same barge left for Sandusky with 437,000 feet of lumber, 100,000 shingles and 200 barrels of salt."

There was no light house then so they had a lamp placed on top of a cedar post just back of where the Maccabee hall now stands in order to guide vessels into port at night. There was a steamboat up or down the lake almost every day. Often there were several vessels in the harbor at the same time waiting for loads of lumber or salt. A tramway to draw lumber on ran nearly three and a half miles back into the country. What changes have taken place since then? The entrance and exit of the stage coach, the development and entrance of the railroads, the advent of the telegraph, telephone and electricity. Marvelous has been the progress in the past 50 years. Chas. G. Learned, who came to Port Austin in 1857 to buy land for Smith, Austin & Dwight, of Detroit, discovered the value of the pine lands of this county and in company with his brother-in-law, F. S. Ayres, purchased several thousand acres of pine land. They also purchased, as has been stated, the property of Mr. Bird and began the manufacture of lumber. Mr. Learned built one of the finest residences on the shore. Both he and Mr. Ayres had large farms later on, Mr. Ayres' consisting of about 1,000 acres,

all in an excellent state of cultivation, and the farm of Mr. Learned's, partially in Port Austin township, consisted of more than 2,000 acres equally well cultivated. James Ryan also had a large farm here. Of the men who had good orchards in the 70s and 80's we noted the names of R. H. Winsor, W. H. Cooper, Mark Carrington, Timothy Walker and others. The scenery around the village was the most beautiful of any along the lake. The business men of the town at that period were: hardware, John Brett; blacksmith, Robert Allison; general store, James Baldwin; harness shops, Chas. Friers and George F. Jackson; Shoes, Taylor & Donley; wagon, carriage and agricultural implements, W. J. Campbell, whose son became a nationally noted cartoonist and artist. Crevy, Cooper & Razek and the Winsors were also in business here. Richards & Richard, physicians. The lawyers were Engle & Engle, and James H. Hall. John King had a furniture store. William H. Cooper came to the county in 1857 and was bookkeeper for Hubbard & Co. for several years. Went to Grindstone City in 1865 and to Port Austin in 1870. He married Charlotte, daughter of Capt. A. Peer and mother of Mrs. Dr. Her- rington, of Bad Axe.

James Ryan came in 1867 and purchased the land on which he built the Ryan House. He also became proprietor of a stage route between Port Huron and Bay City for 11 years and one from Port Austin to Bad Axe for four years.

Other names inseparably connected with Port Austin are those of Edmond Cole, C. B. Cotterell, Richard Smith and G. H. Gallup as well as that of B. W. Merrick, who erected many of the dwelling houses in the village. O. B. Williams had a fine hotel and was well known throughout the country. H. G. Snover who conducted a law business there married his daughter. Mr. Snover is now a resident of Port Huron.

One of the saw mills of that day, built under the supervision of J. W. Kimball cut more than 120,000,000

feet for the eastern market, obtaining the timber from the surrounding country. Ayres & Co. also had a large flouring mill, an institution of great value to the people at that time. Hiram Adams was connected with the salt industry. Forty thousand barrels were shipped out each year. Richard Winsor was an important factor in the political affairs of that period. He was a member of the state legislature when but 23 years of age; served four terms and was then elected to the state senate. He also was engaged in the practice of law both in Huron City and Port Austin for many years. He now lives in Seattle, Washington.

The first religious services held in the township were by Rev. J. B. Varnum in 1854. Later church services were held in Ayres & Learned's store and sometimes in the homes. Capt. McDonald states that Sarah Kimball Case was his first Sunday School teacher. Kimball's point was first owned by a Mr. Dougereau. Mr. McDonald said that Port Austin was but a sand hill when he arrived there. Several of the houses were built of slabs. There was but one frame house. Later the cull lumber was thrown into the lake to float away. Today that same grade of lumber would sell for \$50 or \$60 per thousand. Only the clear lumber was piled on the dock.

Among the things worth mentioning are, the "Broken Rocks" which are situated here at the very tip of the Thumb of Michigan, looking out upon Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron. Beautiful in their picturesqueness they stand out unique among the varied scenery of the lake region and were first visited by Father Marquette in 1668. Dr. James Henderson, of Detroit, formerly of Bad Axe, has written a poem about them in which he says:

"Here the Indian spread his grim tepee in the days of long ago,  
When the Broken Rocks were not so gray and the giants were all  
laid low;  
And the Indian maiden trilled her song to join with the sea's low  
croon,  
As she watched the braves in their birchen barks under the silver  
moon."

The government built for the port a good light house on a reef two and a half miles north and east from the town. It was completed in 1878. Before that time when expecting boats they would build bon fires on the beach or hang a lamp on a cedar post. Here we find the earliest Catholic mission in the county. The Presbyterians organized a society in 1871 with E. P. Clark as pastor. The Baptist church was organized February 12, 1875, at the home of F. S. Ayres. Today the town is noted for its summer resorts. Here people from all over the state come each year.

Turning to Grindstone City, also situated in this township, we find a man who came when Huron County was but a wilderness and by his wisdom and energy helped to develop some of the great resources that have placed the county in the rank it holds in this great state today. He quarried stone here in 1834 and we find a record on the old tract book in the Register of Deeds office telling that Capt. Peer located the first land in Huron County in 1839. This land was just east of what is now Grindstone City. He also built a grindstone mill, using water power. Among those who assisted him in his work we find the name of James Dufty, whose name is connected later on with the settlement of Caseville. Capt. Peer was also the owner of several brigs and schooners and had spent a long and varied career upon the lakes. His daughter, Mrs. Cooper, of Bad Axe, tells this story of 1852:

"In that year I came up the shore with my father and mother. We landed just outside of the quarry. Capt. Gill's father came to meet us with a fish boat. We

came up on the old steamer Huron. My father had a yoke of oxen on board. The men threw the oxen off the boat and they had to swim ashore. We remained three months and during that time I wore out my shoes. As there was no place to buy more Mrs. Gill made me a pair of moccasins with the seams on the outside. I had to wear these back to Port Huron. Three years later I came up with my father in a sail boat and before we left Port Huron there had been skating on the Black River but at this time it was raining hard. We reached the quarry some time the next day and the following day as far as we could see there was nothing but ice. When we passed Huron City Mr. L. Hubbard remarked, 'That must be Capt. Peer. No one else would dare to venture out.' We did not have a stage until 1862."

Richard Winsor, editor of The Huron County News in 1870 gave the following sketch of the quarries at Grindstone City in his paper:

"June 16 we started for a trip down the shore which we had not yet beheld. After getting in a by-road or two at the end of which we always brought up in a tree top light was seen ahead through a rift in the woods and the stone quarries came in view. These quarries are two in number and are situated six miles below Port Austin. It is thought that some unknown voyagers discovered at this point the existence of a quality of stone the grit or grain of which is far and widely known as being superior to that of any other quarries in the world for grindstones, scythe stones, etc. A company under the name of Pease & Smith located the first quarry and continued the opening and getting out of stone with varied success for about ten years. Capt. Peer was related to one of the firm who later died and his property passed into Capt. Peer's hands through heirship. He then ran the business for a few years and finally disposed of his entire interest to Wallace & Prentiss, its

present owners. William H. Cooper opened the second quarry in 1865. The capital stock in these two companies is in that of Wallace & Prentiss' Lake Huron Grindstone Quarry \$20,000; in that owned by Mr. Cooper \$10,000. Total, \$30,000. In a season at the first named of these quarries 1,900 tons of stone are manufactured and at the other 1,500 tons, making a total of 3,400 tons manufactured, docked and shipped during the season. In connection with the four new lathes for turning grindstones in the quarry of Wallace & Prentiss is to be found the shop for the making of whet stones and so forth. Two gangs of saws are at work as we enter, which saw masses of rock placed under them into slabs about one inch in thickness. These are then squared and placed under a descending saw which slices them into rough scythe stones. The finisher then takes them in hand and by means of wearing them on a revolving cylinder produces the finely shaped and well finished whetstones and heel stones that we buy in the harvest time in the village stores.

There are two distinct grades of rock in the quarries termed from their respective qualities, the light and heavy rock. The light rock is from 12 to 15 feet deep, while the heavy rock is five or 10 feet deeper. The rock lies in strata varying from two to three inches to six feet in thickness; the top sheets being very light. The grindstones made here vary in weight from three pounds to three and one-half tons. They are shipped to all parts of the United States and Canada and also to Germany, Russia and other foreign countries. About 80 men are employed at these works and these with their families form quite a community which bears the appropriate sobriquet of Grindstone City. Besides the manufactured stone there is shipped from here large quantities of building stone to the various cities on the lakes. Ever since the first opening the quarries have increased in importance and thousands of dollars have

been expended in improvements such as shipping docks, warehouses and so forth."

We find that W. Cooper sold his quarry in 1871 to Worthington & Sons. James Wallace was the first partner in the firm who bought from Capt. Peer but later took into partnership Robert Wallace, of Grindstone City, Frank B. Wallace and E. L. Wallace, of Detroit taking the name of the Lake Huron Stone Company. Robert Wallace, whose name is connected with the business came to America from Ireland when but a lad of 15. He worked as a laborer in the quarry from 1854 to 1864, then secured the position as manager and finally became the chief proprietor in 1868. His family have evinced the same traits of industry and ability and are well known throughout the state today for their active work in business, political and social life.

In 1874 the first post office was established with James Green as postmaster. In 1888 the Cleveland Stone Company purchased all the property owned by the Lake Huron Stone Company and thus became the sole proprietors of the quarry property at Grindstone City. They employed about 150 men and manufactured about 35 to 40 tons of grindstones daily. One grindstone made here weighed six tons.

In 1860 J. B. Johnson, afterward so well known in the county, came to Grindstone City, where he and a brother of his were engaged in the quarry business. Mrs. Johnson taught school here on account of the scarcity of teachers. Their home was often used as a preaching place for the traveling M. E. preachers of that period.

## RUBICON TOWNSHIP

Where the township of Rubicon now is was for many years the site of lumbermen's camps. Forest Bay was quite a large place then. The meeting to perfect

the organization of this township was held April 4th, 1859. W. D. Ludington was elected the first supervisor. It is almost impossible to tell at this date just who the first settlers were. 1855 is the date of the first appearance of the white race at this particular part of the county. Hunters and trappers as well as fishermen from St. Clair and Sanilac counties used to make it their headquarters. About the year 1850 shingle weavers came up the shore and plied their trade here. In 1855 a man by the name of Diamond came along and camped for some time in the vicinity. Later he took out several United States patents of timber land. The river that flows through the township is named after him. He was here two years and during that time Port Hope was named in this manner, according to a paper given by Mrs. Bisbee of that place. Mr. Southerd and Mr. Witcher, put off of a steamboat outside of here, tried to reach the shore in a small skiff. They rowed all night with no success and Mr. Southerd declared that if ever they reached the shore they would call the place of landing a port of hope. They finally landed at the site of the present docks and true to their word named it Port Hope.

In 1857 W. R. Stafford came from Lexington and purchased the claims of Southerd and Diamond and the rest of his company took out United States patents on the balance of the land. A saw mill was erected in 1858 and the town grew all around this mill. This plant of Stafford's was entirely destroyed by the fire of '71 Over 100,000,000 feet of choice lumber was manufactured here. Mr. Stafford drove the first double team over the lake shore road and also brought in the first buggy. Later he drove the first cutter into Port Austin.

W. F. Clark, of Port Austin, editor of The Huron County News, in an article on Port Hope in 1871, speaks of Mr. H. E. Baker, one of the editors of The Detroit Tribune, making a trip up the shore. Mr. Baker was





**HON. ALBERT E. SLEEPER**

Ex-Governor of Michigan and a Former President  
of the Huron County Pioneer and  
Historical Society.

especially impressed with the town of Port Hope in that day, and says:

"Port Hope on the whole is the handsomest village in general appearance above Lexington. It has a population of 400 and a large mill owned by Stafford & Haywood. The unusually neat and thrifty appearance of the town I attribute to the fact that its proprietors have wisely sold their village lots to all who desire to purchase and hence most of the houses are enclosed with neat fences, painted and surrounded by gardens. There is nothing like giving a man ownership in the roof that shelters and the spot of ground in which it stands. Rented tenements are not improved by the occupant for he has no inducement to do it and the landlord has scarcely more. Port Hope stands out conspicuously in this regard from all the towns along Lake Huron's shore. There is also a large tannery here, partly owned by the town proprietors and partly by Messrs. Dean, who run it and who are bred to their business and understand it to the minutest detail. Here may be met the very unusual sight of father, son and grandson all at work and interested in the same business enterprise. The hides that are consumed are purchased in Toledo and other down-lake ports, the freight in upward bound vessels being small while hemlock bark is of the best quality and in an unlimited supply. Their large yearly product finds a ready market in the New England States. There is talk of soon building a meeting house. This village is a rival of Sand Beach for the harbor of refuge. It is said that Port Hope possesses much better anchorage ground, but the whole matter is a question of facts easily ascertainable. The town is about midway in the county north and south with roads diverging into interior towns so that it will command a goodly portion of the trade. The town itself is laid out into 40 or more squares or blocks and commanding one of the finest views on the entire lakes. On the south is a large grove or park which has been named for General Meade, who in former years erected a tower that now stands for observations while

surveying the lakes. The grove has since been improved and drives made through it so that all may enjoy a walk or drive beneath those wide-spreading branches that have withstood the storms of ages. Vessels coming up the lake cannot get but a short distance above Port Hope with a northwest wind as the land breaks off to the west above this point and a heavy sea always meets them from Saginaw Bay. Vessels bound down the lakes on their regular course make the land at this point and change their course for St. Clair river."

Port Hope had two schools, an English school and also a German school, of from 40 to 60 pupils under the charge of Rev. Th. Schoeck. This town was the trading center for the adjoining townships of Bloomfield, Gore and Huron. It had a fine location, extending back from the shore about three-fourths of a mile. The sand ridge which is supposed to once have been the bank of the lake and skirts the county here nearly meets the shore, giving the village an elevated appearance with an even slope to the water.

The first religious services held in the town were by the Methodists. Rev. John Kay preached to the Presbyterians in 1875.

The first school in Rubicon township was taught by Thomas Nichols, afterwards a Methodist preacher. Mrs. James E. Hayward was the first teacher in the village public school. W. R. Stafford was the first postmaster and held that position 22 years. The tax roll of 1864 shows Stafford personally assessed for two houses, a carriage and a watch. He paid \$1.72 tax on the watch.

William Ludington named the township which had been known in the years before by the settlers of Sanilac and St. Clair as "town 17." It was the headquarters for their lumbermen and fishermen. It had their dense forests of pine, beech, maple, birch, ash, basswood, cedar and hemlock. The soil is varying in character, in some parts dry and in others a sandy loam. In time

the timber either had been cut into logs or burned and many squatter farms appeared all around the little village. Much of the lumber was shipped to Ohio. When a once a week mail was received it did much to melt the forest-line which separated the little village from the outside world.

The great forest fires of '71 and '81 did untold damage but it enabled the settlers as at so many other points in the county to clear with rapidity and cheapness and the result has been excellent farms.

The track of the fires can only be traced today by the new structures which have taken the place of the old ones, neater and better buildings, showing the enterprise and thrift of the community. Some of the most noticeable farms were those owned by James Miller, Robert Hunter and John McWillis. W. R. Stafford's farm contained 800 acres all under cultivation. He also had another farm called the "Mill Farm", used for stock, containing more than 1,000 acres.

The first salt well in the village owned by the Port Hope Salt Company made annually about 45,000 barrels of salt. The second one was owned by R. C. Ogilvie and had a capacity of 200 barrels per day. W. H. Leuty had a general store; Bert Morris, the hardware business; F. Beckwith dealt in boots and shoes, while Mrs. J. Geltz was the milliner. A fine hotel, of which Robert Winterbottom was the genial proprietor, stood on Main street.

As the lake cuts off on the east side a portion the total area of the township is about 23 square miles. The extremes of temperature are in a great measure prevented by the influence of the surrounding waters making the climate very favorable for the cultivation of fruit.

## CHAPTER III

## Early Township History

## BINGHAM TOWNSHIP

Bingham township dates back to 1856 when Joseph Frantz and Joseph Deachin made a location here.

Joseph Frantz was born in Alsace, France, and at the age of 23 years came to America. He went first to Canada where he was engaged in agriculture for three years and then decided to go to Michigan. On going to the state land office at Detroit, he met Philip Link, of Minden, who told him of the very promising prospects and outlook of Huron County although not yet organized. He purchased 160 acres on section 31, Bingham, under the Graduation Act. He set out to look at his property and found that it lay in the depths of an unbroken forest with no roads of any kind. This, however, did not discourage the young Frenchman but with all the courage and energy of his race he determined to locate his land. Finally he reached the place and laid the foundations of a home. He was the first permanent settler in Bingham township and had to carry all his provisions and supplies from Forestville, a distance of 24 miles. One time he carried 100 pounds of flour in on his back, making the trip in one day. The organization of this township took place in 1863 with Robert Scott as the supervisor. It is named after Governor Bingham, who was in power when the township was first settled. Robert Scott settled on section 11 in the year 1857, locating four eighties and by industry and perseverance was able to overcome the trials and difficulties of pioneer life. Another man who came the

same year was Alexander McKenzie, a Scotchman. He purchased 160 acres of land in section 17 Bingham. Six families had moved in by this time. Jacob Miller being one of these and Joseph Deachin who came the same time as his cousin Joseph Frantz. They cut a trail through the forest for eight miles but like his cousin Mr. Deachin was determined to have a home for himself under a free flag and the privileges of a republic. C. F. Hathaway came in and settled on section 20 in 1867. At that time the little settlement numbered 12 or 15 families. There were no roads to speak of and only one or two wagons in the entire township. Another familiar name was that of James McAllister, who bought 400 acres of government land in 1859, on which he was actively engaged in lumbering for several years.

### THE VILLAGE OF UBLY

The village of Ubyly is situated in Bingham township. D. H. Pierce platted the town and met with success in his scheme of establishing the place by offering a substantial inducement to business men to make this a point for their operations. (3) Mr. Pierce was a heavy loser in the fire of '81. The names of J. B. Madill, Alex Pike, Alfred Pagett are all connected with the history and business life of this town.

### PARIS TOWNSHIP

Back in 1856 we find Casimer Smolenski locating land in Paris township on which he erected a building for his future home. From that time this section of the county settled rapidly. The greater portion of the settlers were Polanders who are very thrifty.

Peter Pawlowski in recent years wrote several sketches of this township's early history for The Huron County Tribune, which no doubt are the most reliable records we have. Therefore we quote freely from these

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(3) Huron County Album, page 417.

interesting stories of pioneer days and of those who participated in the development of the township.

Mr. Pawlowski says: "In the year 1854 three Polish families emigrated to Huron County from Canada. They were John Woytlewicz, Ambrose Chuknowski and Anthony Slavick. These early settlers were men of great courage and determination and soon demonstrated this in reclaiming the marshy land which under their careful and painstaking mode of cultivation rapidly became very productive soil. In the year 1855 Mr. Pawlowski's father, Stephen Pawlowski, landed at Forestville, Sanilac County, with some tools and provisions which he had to carry on his back, fording streams, crossing marshes and going around swamps which he could not cross, to make the first improvement on his farm. Returning back to Canada and speaking of felling the trees he said he had only "cut a hole in the sky". A year later he returned with his wife, but she like many others of the pioneers' wives had to remain alone in the woods for months in the winters while the husbands worked in the lumber camps. At such times Mrs. Pawlowski carried her supplies on her back from Forestville, a distance of 18 miles. Another pioneer was John Pyonk, who walked 100 miles to get his cook stove. He took it apart at Forestville and carried it home one piece at a time.

Miss Binenza, now Mrs. Charles Worchock, quite a frail girl at the time, made over 60 18-mile trips for supplies for her parents and later for herself. Some of the fruit trees in Mr. Pawlowski's orchard were brought in on her back. This orchard is the oldest one in Paris.

The forest abounded with all kinds of game. Deer were very plentiful. When Mr. S. Pawlowski was building his second log house, John Woytlewicz shot a deer from the building they were working on. Often they had to get up at night to scare the deer away from destroying the crops. There were hundreds of wolves and almost any night one could hear them howling in the dark, deep forests.

The first mail was brought into Paris from Forestville. Eight years later a turn pike was built to Cato, now Charleston, and later to Minden. In 1869 a grist mill was built which relieved the housewives, as most of the grinding before that time was done with a 100-pound stone. In 1874 a saw mill was built by Susalla Bros., at Parisville, and this helped the men out. Before this they sawed the lumber by hand.

Paris township was organized in 1861 with Donald Curry as supervisor. Stephen Pawlowski's farm was valued at \$100 at that date. The forest fires of '71 and '81 destroyed the timber and half of the settlement. It wiped out an entire family except the father, who was absent. James Shaw came to this township in the early sixties. He lived in Paris at the time of the Polish rebellion against conscription in 1863 and his home was visited by the U. S. troops.

#### DWIGHT TOWNSHIP

South of Port Austin is the township of Dwight, settled in 1856 by Henry Hellems, who was also the first supervisor. Here we find J. F. Weatherhead, who came in 1859 and Benjamin Cartwright, who came in 1861, and bought 80 acres of land. He was the owner of the first wagon, the first fanning mill and the first threshing machine and also built the first brick chimney in Dwight. Other early settlers were Thomas Sullivan, M. Fremont and Peter Smeader, who spent nine years in Port Austin before coming here.

Maguire Fremont was an early and well known pioneer of this township. He came in 1856 to Port Austin, where he worked 16 years in a saw mill and in 1879 located land and established a home in Dwight. He was one of the organizers of the Catholic church in Port Austin and was a splendid type of the sturdy and thrifty settlers in this county. Once he walked from Bay City to Dwight, a distance of 78 miles, in one day.

The soil in this township is of a gravelly loam nature in the northern part and sandy in the southern part.

The timber was originally hard wood with some pine and hemlock. Bird's Creek and its tributaries run through the township and afford good drainage. All kinds of fruit do well here. The township has several good schools.

### SHERMAN TOWNSHIP

Down in the very southeastern part of the county was the division known as White Rock, first organized with Sherman under the name of "White". The name was afterwards changed by special act of the legislature to White Rock and the other part of the territory was set off as Sherman. A Mr. Smith is said to have been the first settler at White Rock in 1845. The land here is flat and a sandy loam. On the site of the village fishermen and shingle weavers would camp for months at a time when they pursued their avocations. The first clerk of Huron County was a pioneer in this section, Robert Irwin. He bought an extensive salt block, which was established in 1871 by Thompson & Bros. John Stocks, who came in 1852 was another pioneer. He had been a soldier in the Mexican war, enlisting in 1846. Robert Munford was a leading merchant in White Rock, coming to that vicinity in 1860. Clarke Munford, now president of the Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society, is his son. Sherman was organized under its present name in 1865. It was settled in 1856 by John Huersanger and Joe Willy and others. The land of this township is rolling except in its northerly portion. The timber was beech, maple, ash, helmock, elm and basswood. The soil is a clay loam in spots and clay or sandy in other parts. The entire township was burned over in the fire of '71 and the northwest corner in '81. There are several creeks in the township, Welsh, White river, Elm and Sucker creeks. At an early date there were four schools and two churches. Robert Campbell had a fine residence in the town of Ruth as well as a general store. This town is on the Sand Beach division of the railroad. The town was formerly named Adam's Corners. It had a hotel and two saw mills. Mr. Campbell

acted as express and station agent as well as postmaster and lumber manufacturer. Mr. Hanselman was one of the pioneers in this section of the county, locating here before Sherman became a township. Such men were the beginners of progress and the builders of civilization. They cleared away forests, bridged streams, opened roads, built houses and barns and thus paved the way for those who followed them. Mr. Hanselman was a member of the board of organization and the privilege of naming the township was accorded to him. He greatly admired General Sherman and his achievements in 1862, and thus selected the name of Sherman to honor his memory on the Huron peninsula. Mr. Hanselman served the new township for 13 years as its efficient supervisor. Other settlers followed and among the names we find that of L. Tschirhart, who was the fifth man to make this township his home.

To such men the log cabin was a necessity, but the first thing was to reach his location. This often meant the cutting of a path into the unbroken wilderness. In many places the ground would be soft and yielding, if not covered with water. Thick undergrowth varying with the open forest would meet the eye of the traveler and a few miles a day would be the most that could be gained. When the site was finally reached the sturdy settler with the help of the few neighbors would erect the "log cabin", his future home. The cracks between the logs of which were stopped with wedge-shaped chinks and plastered with clay. The single room was divided by hanging up quilts or sheets. In this cabin the pioneer and his wife and children set up that sacred thing we call home.

### HUME TOWNSHIP

Coming up the shore we find a well known township, that of Hume, named after Walter Hume, who came some time in the 'fifties. He has been called the Daniel Boone of this portion of Huron County. He married Mary Schilling, a daughter of an early pioneer of

Sebewaing township and built the first house and opened the first clearing in what is now Hume. He also built a hotel at the mouth of the Pinnebog river, which was probably the first structure for that purpose in this part of the county. He owned at one time over 1,000 acres of land near here. The Indians called him their friend and many a day he spent in their wigwams. The only roads were Indian trails and the nearest neighbors were miles away. The next settlers to come were Anthony Etzler and two brothers who located a half section of land. There were no families as all of the men mentioned were single. No improvements of any kind within five miles of their location. All supplies were obtained at Port Austin. Obstacles of a formidable type were the rule not the exception and not the least of these were the wolves with which the forests were infested. It often happened that the early settlers were beset with these fierce creatures as they traveled back and forth to the settlements to get the necessities of life. Mr. Etzler had a thrilling experience on returning one time from Port Austin with a bag of flour on his back. Part way home he discovered three wolves on his tracks. The forest was dense, making rapid progress almost impossible and the burden on his back increased the danger. He finally had to drop the bag of flour and make the best time possible. Only the urgency of his peril which had grown clearer with every step saved his life, for the savage animals were close upon his heels when he reached the little log cabin exhausted and worn in the race with his foes.

This township was heavily timbered with pine, hemlock, cedar, beech and maple. The soil is a clay loam except that bordering the bay. It is drained by the Pinnebog river which for many years was the principal means of transporting logs to the saw mills at Port Crescent. As fine a body of pine as was ever seen once shaded this land but it has fallen before the sturdy axe of the pioneer, been manufactured into lumber and become a factor in the construction of many of the cities of this country. Over the ground where the Indian chased

the red deer and elk, and the wolves and lynx held nightly vigils may be seen the prosperous farms and villages of today.

Among the men who located land in Hume township was Jonathan A. Stockman, a prominent Michigan land owner who purchased here in 1849. This later became a mill site where many logs, cut in the valley of the Pinnebog river, were converted into lumber in the early days. The drainage of about five townships is carried by this river into the lake. It's headwaters are near Wadsworth.

### A VANISHED VILLAGE

The vanished village of Port Crescent was situated at the mouth of the Pinnebog on a bluff overlooking the bay. The peculiar crescent shaped line of the bay which forms a natural harbor gave the town its name. Not only was this town a great lumber center but also a noted fishing point for herring and white fish. Eakins & Soule did a large business in this line at one time. They also owned a salt block. Another one was owned and operated by Bennett Haskell. Each company had a saw mill and a general store in connection. The two hotels were kept by William Carter and William McCoy. A drug store by F. W. Sellars, M.D.; a meat market by George Meader. Two of the best docks in the county were built here and a regular line of steamers and freight vessels came to this port. The pioneer miller of Huron County lived here, Christian Schlegelmilch, who owned the first grist mill. He came to the village in 1866 and determined to build a mill on the Pinnebog river which project he carried into effect. It ran by steam power. Three months after the first mill was built it was burned down, but he immediately rebuilt the structure and manufactured flour that was noted for its excellent quality all over the county. A carriage and wagon shop was conducted by Klebba and afterward by Mutart. Another early pioneer in this vicinity was Reese Williams, who spent much of his time hunting.

J. W. Kimball was the builder of the Bennett Has-

kell saw mill. This mill cut the first lumber on the Pinnebog river. Dr. James Eakins was the pioneer physician of Hume township, coming there in 1869. People often walked 15 to 20 miles to secure his services. No telegraph or telephone in that period. Dr. Spohn was an early settler here. Thomas Sinclair took an active part in affairs of those days. One of the important lumbering firms was Woods & Co., who conducted an immense business and opened a camp at the mouth of the Pinnebog before Port Crescent came into existence. The history of a clerk they had by the name of Holmes constitutes quite a romantic chapter in the history of the county. Chas. D. Thompson, of Bad Axe, gave this in full in a splendid article, written about the "Broken Rocks" country a few years ago. Today all that remains of Port Crescent is the story of its vanished glory. It reads like some mythical legend of the past and the people who once walked its busy streets are either in the "eternal world" or scattered over the face of the earth. Mr. Thompson mentions the sand dunes along the lake shore and says: "The only opening between Port Austin and Caseville is the Pinnebog opening at Port Crescent. The sand here has peculiar constituents which make it valuable for use in smelting copper and in the manufacture of glass. Shipments from Miss Haskell's dock are made by boat to the copper smelters of the Upper Peninsula and Tonawanda, N. Y. and to the glass factories at Detroit and Cleveland. Otherwise the sand plains back are of little value.

About three and a half miles further up the shore we come to Loosemore's Point. There are several small islands near the shore and the scenery is beautiful. There is a tradition that a pot of gold was buried here by the Indians many years ago. No one has ever found it, however. The point takes its name from a former owner who lived here in a large, loosely built building which was called "Loosemore's Castle." Still further up are the Babbitt Quarries. Here we find sand stone which in former years was shipped to Detroit for building purposes. These quarries are not worked now.

## CASEVILLE TOWNSHIP

Caseville township is next and is numbered 17 north of range 10 east. It embraced all of the territory now occupied by Brookfield, Chandler, Lake, Fair Haven, Grant, Oliver, McKinley and Winsor. A meeting to organize the township and elect officers was held April 2, 1860. At this time Alexander Wheeler was elected supervisor, Abraham Fox, treasurer and Francis Crawford, clerk. A sandy ridge varying from a hundred rods to three or four miles belts the shore of the bay and where the village of Caseville is situated the Pigeon river empties into the lake. This fact gave the village the name of the "Mouth" in early days. One of the earliest records we have of white men visiting this place on the Pigeon river is that related by Edwin Jerome at a meeting held in Bay City, June 24, 1874. Mr. Jerome said: "In the latter part of the summer of 1833 I enlisted in the war department commanded by General Anderson, then a resident of Detroit, to assist in a coast survey of Lake Huron. Our field service commenced on the shores of Lake Huron a few miles above Fort Gratiot, at the then northern terminus of the government survey of Michigan. Our party made the first survey of the pearly little stream, took soundings of the noble harbor and the beautiful site of the then far famed city of White Rock. Leaving this capacious harbor so well stocked with defensive boulders we soon arrived at and successfully doubled that rough, rocky, small caverned cape, Pointe Aux Barques. Leaving the broad expanse of Lake Huron we entered the extensive bay of Saginaw, whose dangerously rough seas brought to mind the perilous voyages of the fishermen of that and later times. At our arrival at Pigeon river we crossed over and made a survey of Charity Island, but unfortunately left a small dog belonging to Lieut. Poole in the woods. The next day I was detailed with four others and with two days' provisions in a yawl boat to rescue the dog. We proceeded about 13 miles, propelled by oars under a clear, calm sky and placid waters. On approaching the cove sided

island we were reminded of our errand of mercy by the dog leaping into the air, running and capering, with joyous yelpings he leaped into the boat.. We immediately set out on our return with the brightest prospects and a full spread of canvas. When about eight rods from shore we suddenly encountered a southwesterly gale and twice attempted and failed to come in stays with a view to regain the island. On the the third endeavor our mast cracked about off near the foot and the sail dipped water bringing in stays double quick with an ominous sheet of water pouring over the side. By a great and despairing effort with our weight on the upper side our sail lifted from the water and our craft righted. Hats and shoes were vigorously plied in bailing and as soon as possible our oars were put in motion and the boat headed for the island, a quarter of a mile distant. After an hour of the hardest struggle for life we found ourselves nearing the island on which we were glad to camp for the night. The next day we placed our little craft before the gale and one hour and twenty minutes sped us safely into our camp on the Pigeon river." (6).

About 1836 Reuben Dodge, a hunter, trapper and shingle weaver, came to what is now Caseville and built a small house just back of the Holland House on the banks of the river. With him were his wife and three daughters, Sarah (afterwards Mrs. Moses Gregory), Mary and Susan. July 24, 1840, his son, Reuben Dodge, Jr., was born, the first white child in this section of the country. For the first four years this family had no neighbors other than Indians. This place and above the present Caseville cemetery being a favorable camping ground. Fish and game were in abundance. There were also plenty of wild fruit and nuts in their season. The maple trees nearby furnished sap for sugar. One squaw came up every spring from Port Huron during the sugar season. They had tapped the trees for many years before the white settlers came as the black spots in the trunks where the cuttings had been made to get the sap

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(6) Michigan Historical Col. Vol. 1, page 22.

were entirely grown over and the annual concentric rings showed that sugar-making had been carried on for more than a century. For flint for arrow points, spears or knives these red men had resorted to the vicinity of Bay Port or Port Austin. They had an arrow factory at the east end of the "Broken Rocks" and flint chips can still be found there. They also made pottery at the clay mound in a grove of small trees near there. At this date there was quite a settlement of the Chippewa Indians on the Sheboyonk creek. They were quite friendly towards the white settlers and often gave them venison or bear steak. Amid such surroundings as these the children of this pioneer family spent their childhood. The first white neighbor they had was a trapper and hunter by the name of Heath. He erected a log cabin nearby for his Indian wife Milly and his two sons John and Martin. It was no unusual thing for these white fur traders and trappers to marry Indian women. Many of these men spent their lives in Indian communities and by their kindness to the savages made the future settlers' entrance into the community possible. The traders' influence was often required to induce the Indians to give up their hunting grounds to the emigrant and peacefully vacate lands which they had rightly considered theirs. (2) A few years after his arrival Heath died while Dodge was away on one of his periodical hunting trips. As there was no undertaker, Heath's Indian wife dug the grave and buried him just behind the present residence of James Horton. This man was the first white person buried there. Mr. Dodge killed the last moose seen in Huron county near the present Maccabee Hall. He had a narrow escape with his life from the infuriated creature, which attacked him on being wounded. At this time Port Huron was the nearest market and there Dodge carried his shingles and furs in a canoe. A tenderfoot would have been out of place on trips like these. In the day plying the oars, at night camping if possible near some rivulet or spring. Wrapping himself in a blanket

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(The Michigan Fur Trader).

with gun nearby he often lay on the bare ground or perhaps with a few green boughs for a bed. Such was the life of many of these trappers, stripped seemingly of every comfort in the shape of food, clothing or recreation. They became immune to every form of hardship and privation and resembled in many respects their Indian allies.

The next white man to settle in this vicinity was Charles Smith, a land broker and hunter. Milly Heath became his house keeper. He pre-empted the land which now constitutes the Leipprandt and Wightman farms, also one forty of the Joe Gwinn estate. In his rambles along the shores of Saginaw bay he made the acquaintance of James Dufty, who had come to Grindstone City in 1848. Neighbors were few and far between so in the course of time Mr. Dufty and his family came up the shore in a canoe to visit Smith. Such events as these were the only breaks in the humdrum life of the pioneer. When Mr. Dufty landed at Pigeon river he found no one living there other than Chas. Smith and some Indians, Dodge having departed on one of his hunting trips down the shore. He would often be away for weeks at a time if he found good timber to make into shingles. It was a common thing for the shingle weavers to prey upon Uncle Sam's timber domain before the organization of Huron County. Mr. Dufty spent a few days visiting and then returned to his home near Port Austin. William Dufty, his son, although but a child at the time has a vivid recollection of seeing the squaws. He was naturally afraid of these dark-skinned women, but they were delighted with his light-colored hair and tried in their way to be very friendly with him. In 1856 James Dufty moved to Caseville and entered upon his duties as employee of Mr. Crawford. He became justice of the peace at the formation of the township and held this office until his death. His name is associated with the erection of all the steam saw mills built in Huron County at that early period. During the later years of his life he served as sexton of the Caseville M. E. church and woe betide the boy who dared to make any disturb-

ance during a service. One look was enough and there was perfect order. His untiring industry, his legal acquirements and his skill as an advocate will long be remembered by those who knew him in the years of his activity in the local affairs of the town.

### PINE TIMBER ATTRACTS ATTENTION

Early in 1851 the splendid pine timber in the county began to attract the attention of lumbermen and speculators from states adjoining Michigan. In 1851 Leonard Case, of Cleveland, purchased 20,000 acres of pine land on the Pigeon river. The next year William Rattle, representing the interests of Mr. Case came and built a saw mill at the mouth of the river. The little settlement that gathered around this place was named Port Elizabeth in honor of Mr. Rattle's wife. In 1856 Mr. Case sold this property to Francis Crawford and George Martin, of Cleveland. This partnership continued for two years when Mr. Crawford became sole owner and the village was re-named Caseville.

Another name familiar to every lumberman was that of Moses C. Gregory. He had lumbered in his native state, Maine, and about the year 1851 went to Cleveland, where he entered the employment of John G. Worth, who sent him out in search of pine timber. In 1853 he landed at Stockman's Point (now Pointe Aux Barques summer resort) and followed the Indian trail to Pigeon river. Here he found Reuben Dodge and Chas. Smith. He spent some time in getting out shingle bolts which he shipped to Cleveland on the first floating craft other than a canoe landing at Caseville. This was the schooner Ohio with Capt. John Armour in command. In 1857 he entered the employment of Francis Crawford with whom he remained for over 16 years. During that time he married Sarah Dodge Loverage, daughter of Reuben Dodge. For a number of years he had large lumber camps on the Pigeon river and also had charge of many of the log drives in the spring of the year. After he left the employment of Mr. Crawford he was connected for a number of years with the hotel interests of

Caseville. Of strong and striking individuality to meet him once was always to remember him. He was also postmaster of the town under President Harrison.

The first hotel in Caseville was opened by Robert Squires in 1856. It was situated at the head of what is now main street.

Rev. J. B. Varnum held the first preaching services in this vicinity. His circuit reached from Lexington to Bay City, then Hampton. Educational opportunities were limited but the children of the village were given private lessons by Mr. Wheeler, the first supervisor, and the first school was taught by Miss Elizabeth Fox. The second teacher was Miss Setton.

After Mr. Crawford became owner of the Pigeon river property he not only built saw mills but later a grist mill, the foundation of which is still to be seen.

#### SALT WELLS, IRON WORKS AND THE MCKINLEYS

In the spring of 1871 the first salt well was opened and sunk to a depth of 1764 feet. Later in 1878 three other salt wells were opened. The annual production of salt was from 40,000 to 50,000 barrels. The Pigeon River Salt and Iron Works were started in 1873 by Messrs Edison, Sandford & Crawford. The works ran about a year or more when owing to the depression in the iron trade the blast went out. The property changed hands, additional works were put in and the furnace started once more in 1879. It ran a while then closed down. While these works were in operation a familiar face on the streets of Caseville was that of William McKinley, the father of President McKinley. He had an interest in the business and during this time he and Mrs. McKinley were often guests in the Woodworth home. He boarded at Jacob Shelton's, one of the early settlers in the village who came in 1868. What is now Johnson Park, recently given as a public park to the county by Messrs. Wallace, Tack & Curran, was owned by Mr. McKinley.

In connection with the manufacture of salt the name of James Curran is prominent. He came to Case-

ville from Saginaw in 1871 and immediately entered upon his duties as manager of the salt blocks, holding that position during all the years of its manufacture.

As lumber was the first manufacturing of Mr. Crawford after he purchased the pine lands on the Pigeon river there are several names worthy of mention in connection with that industry. Henry Libby, who had worked for Mr. Crawford in Cleveland, came in 1857 to Caseville. He erected all the machinery in the works built there and was acknowledged a master of his trade as a machinist and engineer. Another man well known at that period was Henry Campau. His people are intimately connected with much of the pioneer history of Saginaw and Detroit. One of his ancestors once owned Belle Isle. In the first store built for Mr. Crawford and Mr. Martin, James Adams officiated as clerk and manager. This building was afterwards removed to what is known as the "Cove" to be used as a carpenter shop. Could this old structure have spoken it doubtless would have unfolded a chapter in pioneer history never to be repeated in Huron County. For ten years it was the only place between Sebewaing and Port Crescent, a distance of 35 miles, where the necessities of life could be obtained. It stood on the bank of the Pigeon river just at one side of what is now the Grand Trunk railway track. Mr. Crawford built the second store on the hillside near the present depot. Here he did an immense business for many years. One of the head sawyers in the mills was William Barbor, who came in 1857. He was engineer for several years in the grist mill belonging to Mr. Crawford; also ran a large boarding house which was situated on the park now belonging to the G. A. R. society. Once a bear entered the pantry of this house, through an open window and ate all the fried cakes which had been freshly baked for the morning meal. It also tipped over a swill barrel in its endeavors to get a drink after its feast. No one heard the bear, although Mrs. Dufty and Mrs. Robert Smith, then unmarried, slept in a room adjoining the pantry. Among the young men of that day were William Dufty, Robert Smith, John Smith,

Bert Smiley, Columbus Phoenix, Carl Patterson, Cunningham Richmond, Henry Loverage, Jack McKenzie and the Fisher boys. William Duffy at the age of 18 was head sawyer in one of the mills. He continued several years in the employment of Mr. Crawford, also acting as foreman in the lumber camps. Going to the woods was an annual event in those times. In 1865 he purchased the original 80 acres of land his father had owned in the earliest history of the township. Mr. Fisher and Robert Smith are now living in Caseville and can tell many incidents and adventures that happened amid the hardships and difficulties of pioneer life during the development of the county. Among the men who came later were T. B. Woodworth and J. A. Holmes. Mr. Woodworth came in 1867 and for the next few years was engaged in lumbering and ran a store in connection with this business. He was elected county surveyor in 1870, the duties of which office he performed for several years. Was elected supervisor of the township in 1868 and held that office continuously until 1876, in which year he was elected the representative of Huron County in the legislature of Michigan. He then took up the study of law and was admitted to the bar in July 1876. Was prosecuting attorney in 1882. He held a prominent place in all town affairs and did much to build up the educational interests of the village. Was one of the founders of the Methodist Episcopal church of Caseville and superintendent of the Sunday School for 35 years. He was editor of the first paper published in Caseville, "The Caseville Advertiser." The members of his family are well known in the county and state today. J. A. Holmes, who landed at Caseville March 17, 1871, was a merchant in the town for a number of years. He took a prominent part in the civil, educational and religious affairs of the place. Mrs. Holmes also took a leading part in the church and social life of that period. She died several years ago and Mr. Holmes is now a resident of Lansing.

Another merchant was H. H. Case, a brother-in-law of Mr. Crawford. His second wife was Sarah Kimball,

of Port Austin. The first physician was Dr. James Eakins, who only remained here a few weeks and then located at Port Crescent. His successor was Dr. John Hutchins and still later Dr. S. J. Henderson and Drs. Johnson and Jackman.

A well known lumberman and sailor was Captain John Waters. He had at one time the largest lumber camp on the Pigeon river. Among the very earliest settlers in the township were the four Anderson brothers, who came in 1860. Two of the brothers, John and George with a cousin of theirs, had traversed the county the year before in order to locate land. They walked up the shore, crossing over to Verona, where they obtained a loaf of bread from Thomas Philp, all he had to spare and with this as supplies they crossed just where Bad Axe now stands and three days later came out at the Indian Mission House on the Shebeon creek., hungry and tired after their wearisome journey. Mr. Auch, the missionary had gone to Sebewaing to try to get some bread. However, they had a good dinner of potatoes and fish with their Indian hosts. The next year the four brothers secured the entire acreage of section 11 and one-half of section 14 under the Graduation act. The county at this time was unimproved. Life to these early settlers was extremely primitive. Log cabins sheltered its joys and sorrows. No roads other than those used for lumbering. Wild game was abundant. One morning the wolves drove a deer into the small clearing around John Anderson's house and only departed when driven off by the men.

The nearest market for farm produce was Sebewaing, 20 miles away, and the mail was brought up from Port Austin about once a month by men sent for it.

Two other men who located in the township were D. Perry and Chas. Stewart. That same year Richard Gwinn, Sr. decided to secure land here. He came up the old sand road from Port Austin and when he reached Port Crescent met an old schoolmate of his, Walter Hume. When about three and one-half miles from Caseville he also met for the first time Moses C. Gregory. He

was taken into this home and treated with as much hospitality as though he were an old friend. Mr. Gregory being a lumberman and land broker was able to give Mr. Gwinn the necessary information in regard to land, timber and soil. He also secured Mr. Wheeler, afterwards the first supervisor of the township, to go with Mr. Gwinn and they selected what today is the "old homestead". Here Grandma Gwinn spent nearly 60 years, dying when she was nearing her 97th birthday after a life that had witnessed all of the improvements of the past century.

One of the most prosperous farmers in the 'sixties was George Cleaver, who purchased the old Chas. R. Smith farm with 40 acres under cultivation. The first frame barn in the township was on this farm. In the local history of Caseville appear the names of these pioneer settlers: the Meyers, Shampaigns, Wilmicks, Hemsteads and William and Charles Fisher, with their families. John Duane, who was manager of Crawford's Caseville farm.

Arthur McAulay was another resident of the township. He was a son-in-law of Chas. Fisher, and at one time owned the property now belonging to the Leipprandt Bros. in McKinley township. When the McAulay family visited the Fishers they would go down the river in a canoe as the road was a mere trail through the forest. Joining this farm was the land owned by William Handy, who came in '51 from Port Austin, where he landed in 1849. When he came up the shore in order to secure more game he first purchased land near Caseville. Both Mr. Handy and Mr. McAulay assisted in the construction of the base line on Sand Point under the supervision of Gen. George Meade, of Gettysburg fame. During the four years that Gen. Meade was engaged in the lake survey he had his headquarters in Detroit and it was from there he was called to serve in the Union Army in 1861. Mr. Handy and Mr. McAulay were paid in gold for their services. This was brought up from Port Austin, the nearest post office. Mr. Simmons was another early settler in this vicinity. The Conatons and Flannerys came later. Along the Pigeon river we find

the Wilfong, Newman and Herbert families. William Horn owned the land later purchased by D. Schubach and erected the first log cabin built on it. Still further up the river were the Notter, Barr, Bill and Verbeck homes. At Mud Creek the settlers were John Richmond, Ann Smith, a widow, and the three Smith brothers, the Harders and Rows. The three Wallace brothers with their aged mother and sister Maria owned land bordering on both sides of the creek. Henry Wurm had taken as a homestead the farm now belonging to Preston Murdock. He fled to Canada to escape the draft and was killed a few weeks later in a saw mill. The land went back to the government and was taken up later by M. Birshing. Robert Morse, Sr. came in 1863 and bought 40 acres of state school land on the north side of the creek and later purchased 40 acres from Dawson Wallace, who enlisted in the Union Army. Very few of these early pioneers had stoves. The cooking was done by means of a fire place. Even the tables and chairs were home made. Benches were found in every home and the brooms were made of hickory. Latches were used to fasten the doors and nearly every door had a cat hole for convenience.

The farm owned by Thomas Smith afterwards became the property of H. and J. J. Murdoch and under their management was one of the noted stock farms in the county. John Murdoch served as supervisor of Caseville township for several years. He was also at one time a member of the state legislature.

In 1870 C. F. Leipprandt came and purchased land on the Pigeon river. He proved to be a progressive farmer as well as preacher, store keeper and wagon maker. He also had a brick yard and in later years was the postmaster at what is now called Hayes. This post-office was discontinued when the R. F. D. service began. His two youngest sons own the old homestead of 320 acres.

### A COMMUNITY EXPERIMENT

Among the vanished villages of Huron County is that of Ora Labora, a colony situated between Caseville

and Wild Fowl Bay (now Bay Port) which was modeled after the famous German society at New Harmony, Penn. The property was held in common but each settler held a piece of ground in his own right. They had several thousand acres of land, bought from the government in 1857-8. The heavy timbered country and the swampy nature of much of the land required a large amount of ditching to render it valuable for cultivation and the remoteness from any existing village, at that time Bay City was the nearest trading point, rendered the making of the colony an extremely difficult task. Their hardships were unusually severe. The purchase had completely exhausted their money. Fever and ague abounded and aggravated all of their other ills and the wonder is that the colonists struggled as long and bravely as they did against the odds they encountered. Then the war came on and in its latter stages sent its drafting summons into their ranks. Too poor to procure substitutes and too honest to run away as many of their neighbors did, thus increasing the burdens which fell upon them (as the county had to furnish its quota) their ranks were depleted until the women and old men were almost left alone to carry on the farming operations. The load was greater than they could bear and *Ora Labora* was broken up. In 1865 the editor of the Huron County News visited the colony and gives this vivid picture of it in that day: "While on a trip up the shore we improved the opportunity of visiting our friend Mr. Emil Baur, pastor and one of the founders of the society which at the present time numbers 140 souls of which 28 are heads of families, 10 single men, five young ladies, 28 wives, 73 children under 14 years of age and 36 voters. The society has purchased about 3,000 acres and contracted with the state for 10,000 more. They have 160 acres cleared and under cultivation. Have built a saw and grist mill making their bread stuffs from grain of their own production and also manufacturing all kinds of lumber both for their own use and exportation. A dock has been built extending several hundred feet into the bay. The society also owns one of the islands in Wild Fowl Bay

containing 180 acres on which they plan to raise grapes. The village of Ora Labora is regularly laid out in squares with wide streets and the colonists have adopted a good old custom of the fatherland adorning the streets with fruit trees. Each newcomer, we understand, is given 40 acres of land."

After the disbandment of the colony we find this statement about the colonists in a Detroit paper of 1871. "The colonists of Ora Labora while they did not succeed as a community did much permanent and really valuable work for that section of the county, and the case being presented to the legislature homesteads of 80 and 40 acres according to service rendered were granted them by the state under proper restrictions and a goodly number of the hardy and faithful band are still to be found living on their own farms, well cleaned up and finely tilled and gradually emerging into a condition of independence and comfort hardly earned and richly deserved." The remaining lands and buildings became the property of the Harmony Colony of Economy, Penn., who held a mortgage on it. A few of the old buildings remain to mark the site of this once populous village. Bert Baur, of Bay Port, is the son of Emil Baur, once so prominent in the affairs of the colony.

### SEBEWAING TOWNSHIP

The township of Sebewaing is situated in the southwest corner of Huron County on Saginaw Bay and contains the village of Sebewaing and the hamlet of Kilmanagh. This township was organized Feb. 12, 1853. Prior to this it was attached for judicial purposes to Tuscola county under the name of Auchville. Frederick Schilling was the first supervisor. Mr. Schilling, his father, mother and one sister were taken and sold as slaves when they first came to America. Their bondage continued 18 months and they had difficulty in getting their freedom. They finally escaped from Pennsylvania, going to New York. They made their way by stealth,

begging food and passing three days of the time without food of any kind.

The first white man to reach what is now the town of Sebewaing was J. J. Auch, who came to preach to the Indians. He found one log house belonging to a half breed named Chas. Rodd. Mr. Auch with the aid of this Indian allies constructed the second house of logs in 1845. He labored among these children of the forest seven years. In 1849 his brother followed him and that same year John Gettel, Frederick Zeigler, John Zeigler and John Gruenbeck entered the county. In 1851 Gottfried Beck, Frederick Schilling, C. Auch and families came from Ann Arbor and were landed with much difficulty on Lone Tree Island at the mouth of the Du Fill river. This island has since been washed away.

Through the efforts of Mr. Auch the Indians were induced to carry them to the main land in a leaky canoe. They were three weeks on the island which tells part of the story of the privations and hardships they endured before finally reaching the site of their future homes. These pioneers built at first but one log house which sheltered the entire population of 45 men, women and children. They procured their supplies from Saginaw by means of small boats and during this period the mail was brought from Hampton (now Bay City) occasionally.

Other pioneers who came there were Christian Bach, Jacob Streiter, Peter Schairer, Mr. Volz, Mr. Ruehle, John Mullerweiss, Jacob Roller, Martin and John Gremmel, Martin and Fred Krouse and Mr. Bauer.

In the family of Mr. Volz there were 13 children. His youngest son John was born here in 1853.

The village was named Sebewaing (in the Chippewa language, a river nearby). The river gradually taking the same name, although on the early maps it is called Du Fill (in French, Thread river). It was very winding and crooked in its course but navigable for small boats for about one mile.

At the session of legislature during the winters of '62-'63 Richard Winsor obtained a grant from the state of five sections of state swamp lands to be appropriated toward laying a channel running as near straight as practicable through the marsh and bar at or near the mouth of the river so that its waters might empty directly into the bay instead of overflowing the valuable lands lying in its immediate vicinity. In addition to the above grant the business men of the village, together with the farmers at the annual township meeting raised by subscription nearly \$4,000 for the same purpose.

### FIRST SCHOOL IN SEBEWAING

The first school was taught by Rev. J. J. Auch in 1854. It was attached to the Lutheran church, of which Mr. Auch was pastor. He had about a dozen pupils in all. The first marriage was that of John Gruenbeck and Margaret Schmidt. The first child born was Mary, daughter of Frederick Schmidt.

Many hardships were endured by the founders of what is today some of the finest homes in the county. There were the mosquitos who never seemed to rest during the summer season, the swampy land, the lack of food other than potatoes, and last but by no means least the ague in all its varied forms. With it one could be in Iceland in the morning and in the torrid zone by midday. No person escaped the clutches of this disease very long. All these things today are but memories of the past and the children and grand-children of these hardy pioneers are enjoying the fruits of their labors.

In 1866 the principal men of the village were Jacob Kundinger, John C. Liken, John Mullerweiss, Albert Irion, Eustus Sert and Henry Lintner. There were two stores, two hotels, grist mill, saw mill, cooper shop, large stave mill, blacksmith, wagon, shoe and tailor shops, school house and church. The various firms were shipping large quantities of oak staves, oak timber,

black ash hoops, cord wood and all kinds of produce to outside markets at this date.

The timber of this township was mixed beech, oak, black and white ash prevailing. There was also some maple. The land is mostly level with a strip of sand on the shores of the bay. The richest soil being in the center of the township. The land drained easily into the Saginaw Bay and the Sebewaing river with its three tributaries.

We cannot conclude the history of Sebewaing without speaking of John C. Liken, whose life history is so closely interwoven with that of the town. Mr. Liken was a cooper by trade. Coming to Sebewaing in 1865 he at once began that branch of business in connection with his other interests. He shipped large quantities of white oak staves to Germany. He built two saw mills and four stave mills, employing over 200 men. In 1874 he erected a fine brick block where you could buy anything from drugs to dry goods. He also had branch stores at Bay Port, Kilmanagh and at Unionville in Tuscola county. He owned over 1,000 acres of land in Huron county and 500 in Tuscola county. He had a prosperous business in Sebewaing up to the date of his death in 1920.

At Kilmanagh, which is situated just on the corners of four townships, the best known name for many years was that of Francis Thompson, who was the first postmaster of the little hamlet. It is a small place to-day owing to the fact that it is several miles from any railroad.

### TOWNSHIP OF FAIR HAVEN

The Township of Fair Haven was organized April, 1863. Its territory was originally included with that of Sebewaing and Caseville. John S. Davis was the first supervisor. The land in the western portion is a sandy loam and in the eastern part a clay loam. The lumber was oak, elm, maple, hemlock and pine. This township

includes all of the islands in Wild Fowl Bay. It has an area of 58 square miles. Its east boundary diverges so as to include part of Sand Point, which is a narrow strip of land extending due west into Saginaw Bay. This point forms the northern boundary of the township and also that of Wild Fowl Bay.

The fire of '71 touched the eastern portion, but the township escaped the destruction of '81. Rev. J. J. Auch, of Sebewaing established a mission on the Sheboyonk Creek, on a beautiful spot near the "Middle" grounds among the Chippewa Indians, who then numbered several hundred. They were peaceful, hospitable and humane, zealous in their devotion to their Che-mon-a-tow (Great Spirit) and were ruled by their beloved old chieftain Soe-a-che-wah-o-sah or (brilliant rising sun) with love and kindness says one familiar with their ways and habits.

Their hunting grounds were extensive and abounded with game. They tilled small patches of ground, raised their own corn and potatoes, bartered their furs for clothing when they had an opportunity to do so.

They were not impressed with Mr. Auch and the interpreters who had frequently misinterpreted what he said. The result was that he did not have a single convert during the years he preached to them. They had bought their land from the government in 1847 and in 1856 sold it to settlers coming into that vicinity.

Most of these Indians either fell a victim to King Alcohol or the smallpox. Some left for parts unknown and others went to Warwick, Canada, until after the Civil War. At the close of that struggle a number of them came back to Huron County, where they hunted, trapped or fished while the squaws made baskets, which they either sold in the villages or to the settlers. Often the children of these Indians would attend the country school if their wigwams were near by.

The little town of Bay Port is in this township. It borders on the bay and is quite a noted summer resort.

The scenery along the shore is beautiful and there are numerous little coves where small craft can rest at anchor. The township is rightly named Fair Haven. The first white settler was Carl Heisterman, who purchased an island in Wild Fowl Bay from the United States. It contained 400 acres. The township was not organized at the time he located, in 1853. He retained this property for 30 years, then sold it to a club from Saginaw for resort purposes. The consideration was \$11,000. Mr. Heisterman was unusually well informed, having obtained his education in Prussia, where he took courses in philosophy, medicine and political economy, going later to Leipsic to translate French medical literature into English. He came to America at the time of the Mexican War and enlisted for a period of five years. When his term of enlistment expired he came to Saginaw and soon afterward to Huron County. He married Mary Dutcher in 1849. Was supervisor of Fair Haven for sixteen years, register of deeds in 1876 and state senator in 1884.

Another island in Wild Fowl Bay was the home of the Gilinghams, who were engaged in the fishing industry.

About a mile from the present site of Bay Port, on the Sebewaing and Port Austin road, was a commodious hotel kept by R. S. Squires, who had come into this county in 1851. All of this region was then one vast wilderness and the Indian trails were the only roads. There were but few white people except those on the eastern shore of the county. The neighbors of Mr. Squires were mostly Indians. His daughter, who died a few years after her birth, was the first white child born in what is now Fair Haven township. It is strange that so many men in all ages have had such a prosperity to abandon the comforts of home in their native land, or land of their birth, and seek a new home in such a wilderness as this was at that early period. The spirit of adventure had a strong appeal for many. Another early settler was William Henne, who came in 1863, and three years before that Sidney Smith came into the township and bought 280

acres on the Shebeon Creek. He lived here alone for many years. The early pioneers of the township nearly all settled along the shore on the old sand road between Bay Port and Sebewaing. Here we find the Tacks, Hartmans, Hilyers, Tarrys, Sharpsteins, Dutchers, Pitchers, Demings and George Taylor, who did all the blacksmith work in those years in that vicinity. The Snell brothers came to Bay Port in the '60's. J. W. Snell and his wife purchased 2,000 acres of land in the county. He built a general store which he conducted in addition to farming and lumbering. He represented the people in the Michigan Legislature for two terms, beginning in 1868. Mrs. Snell did much for the Methodist Episcopal Society at Bay Port, while Mrs. Thomas Snell was an ardent supporter of the Baptist church. Thomas Snell and his wife afterward moved to Bad Axe, where they purchased a farm, while Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Snell moved in later years to Albion to educate their children. The Abbots and Givils were also early settlers here.

The Shebeboyonk Creek drains Fair Haven. Vegetables of all kinds do well here and the township boasts of having produced the largest yield of potatoes in those years in the county, over 300 bushels per acre. Three miles southeast of Bay Port are several quarries, which have been operated in these later years. They produce a stone of surpassing strength and beauty. The stone has a thickness of one hundred feet through all its strata. The upper sixteen feet are limestone, the next twenty feet are a drab-colored sand stone and then follow fifteen feet of red and brown stone which makes very fine building material. Underneath are fifty feet of shale. The tests of the stone prove it to be of remarkable strength and beauty. It is as impervious to water as granite and will weather perfectly. It is also as heavy as any lime stone and as heavy as most granite. It is therefore an ideal material for all building and structural purposes. The upper layer of stone is used for macadamizing roads and has been used for this purpose in the various cities of the state. The second layers are burned for lime. The sand stone is quarried and used for

building purposes. The Hoyt public library in Saginaw is one of the most elegant and conspicuous buildings constructed from it. Today on these grounds are lime kilns, crushing plants and other forms of heavy machinery employing scores and scores of men and turning out tons upon tons of valuable products. Little did the pioneer of those early days dream of the untold wealth lying under his feet as he traveled over this part of the township. The lumber resources were the principal attraction in that period of the county's history. By means of this industry men were enabled to live and support their families.

### VERONA TOWNSHIP

Going away from the bay we find one of the older townships, Verona. The township was organized by act of legislature in the winter of '60 and '61, out of the following territory: Surveyed township No. 16 North of Range 13 East.

The first township meeting was held at the home of Thomas Philp. He with Thomas Tear and Andrew McAllister were the inspectors of the election. At the time Verona was organized there were just 12 free holders residing within its jurisdiction, being just the required number to petition for a new township. Thomas Philp was the first settler and shortly afterward he was joined by Messrs George Martin, John and Thomas Scott and Andrew McAllister. These pioneers were about the only ones who had made any improvements when the township was organized. They deserve much credit for their bold courage in undertaking such an arduous task knowing that they would have to do many a hard day's work, undergo many privations before sufficient improvements could be made to make themselves and families comfortable. With one exception, they had little or no means left after paying for their land and consequently like many others had to live out at different places on the lake shore to earn provisions and other necessities for their families. Then carry

it on their back fifteen or twenty miles through thick woods and swamps without a road or often even a path; only a blaze which by the aid of a pocket compass they were able to follow. This was the only mode of transportation for three or four years, after which sled roads were cut leading from the Forestville state road into their township.

During the winter of '58 a grant of one section of swamp land from the state was obtained for the purpose of making a state road from Sand Beach to Midland City via Bay City. This road did not prove to be a success and in 1861 the governor appointed George W. Pack, commissioner for that portion of the above road which lay in Huron county. Mr. Pack immediately resurveyed it from Sand Beach to Pinnebog River via Bad Axe, running nearly through the center of Verona. In the course of three or four years a good road was built along this route and emigrants began to enter not only Verona but also Sigel.

Mr. Philp had located 320 acres of land under the graduation act in section 36. Had to make two miles of road to reach his future home. He became the first supervisor of the township. Mr. McAllister, who came in 1858 told this story of how the township got its name. He had for neighbors, Thomas Philp and Thomas Tear. They were both scholarly young men who had read much in their native Scotland and were familiar with Shakespeare's works, especially the play "Two Gentlemen of Verona." The scene is laid in Verona, an open place. In some way or another Mr. McAllister and Mr. Philp came to be termed the "Two Gentlemen" and later the three young men decided to call their new home Verona. George Martin, who also came in '58, located on section 25 and built a home in the wilderness. Here his son John was born, the first white child in the settlement. George Whitelem, another settler of '58, tells interesting stories of those pioneer days. When his father came to Verona there was an old mill that worked by hand to

grind the wheat. The grain was put in at the top and came out at the bottom, flour, bran and shorts, all together, but people were glad to have even that kind of flour. The wolves in those days were another source of trouble. A man was going to Verona one day with some meat when the wolves took after him and in order to save his own life he had to drop the meat and flee for safety.

We must not forget to mention Jeremiah Ludington, whose name occurs in the sketch of Sand Beach. In '64 he disposed of his property at Center Harbor, (then known as Jerry's Mill) and the next year became purchaser of about 2,000 acres of good agricultural land, well timbered with cork pine. Mr. Ludington was a true pioneer, fearless, enterprising, prompt to act and resolute to hold, neither discouraged by reverses, nor too elated by success, but persevering until his object was gained. He built a large grist mill, saw mill and also a shingle mill which were hailed as a "God send" by the inhabitants of Verona and the adjoining townships. He also erected a large boarding house, several dwellings, a store, blacksmith and carpenter shop, and last, but not least, one of the largest and finest school houses in the county at his own expense. His house and that of his brother-in-law, John Kneal, were the first frame houses in the township. He employed 60 men and 10 teams in his lumbering operations. In 1869 he cut 40,000,000 feet of lumber and 100 planks averaging from 36 to 49 inches in width. Each plank was 16 feet in length. Two of these planks were in Cleveland for several years and afterwards were shown at the Fair in Philadelphia. Mr. Ludington lost many thousands of dollars in the great fires of '71 and '81. He served in the Michigan Legislature two terms and also three years as State Swamp Land Commissioner. During this time the Huron City and Bad Axe state road was built under his supervision. He also built a number of roads at his own expense in 1866.

Another well known name is that of John Ballentine, who built a store at Verona Mills in 1867, which he conducted until it was burned in the fire of '71. He next tried lumbering and built a saw mill which he ran for seven years when he added a flour mill. Had good success until the fire of '81 swept away all of his property leaving him only 50 cents to start anew with. This he did, moving to Bad Axe, establishing a fine mercantile business.

Robert Scott came into the township in 1859. He was a stone mason by trade and laid the foundation for the first house built by Francis Crawford, of Caseville. He was assisted in this work by Richard Gwinn, Sr. This was the first stone wall built in Caseville township. Two families of the Pangborns came to Verona in 1862 and 1867 and the township settled quite rapidly from that date. The beautiful little village of Verona Mills was swept over by the great fire of '81 and only four buildings were left. This town had a post office established in 1867 with J. Ludington as postmaster. The first school was opened the same year. A great portion of the township is a series of hills and valleys which add much to the beauty of the landscape. The timber found here was beech, ash, maple, cedar, pine and hemlock. This was nearly all destroyed in the terrific fire of '81. The township is drained by Willow Creek, whose outlet is at Huron City. All records were burned, so the real date of the organization of the township is unknown. The following named settlers came before 1868 and had from 10 to 120 acres of land under cultivation: Thomas Rapson, Mrs. Talbert, John Noonan, Fred Pethers, Alex Snetzinger, Richard Braden, Angus McDonald, William Thompson, John Metcalf, James Murray and C. B. Shire. Wheat was the principal crop then.

The first agricultural fair in the county was held in Verona Mills, October 20, 1869. The commodious barn of Mr. Ludington was placed at the disposal of the society for the display of manufactures, agricultural pro-

duce, etc., while the live stock was exhibited in an adjacent enclosure. Among the exhibits we note 10 pounds of maple sugar,  $\frac{1}{4}$  M shaved shingles, 100-foot plank, chain hook,  $\frac{1}{2}$  dozen axe helves, best yoke of matched oxen, best yoke of working oxen, best 30 yards of full cloth. The prize for the last item mentioned was taken by Robert Scott. John Pangman took the first prize for axe helves, while Donald Currie had the best matched yoke of oxen. The paper of that day states that the sheep, like angels' visits, were few and far between. There was also a fine exhibit of fruit.

### COLFAX TOWNSHIP

Colfax township is located very near the center of the county and joins Verona on the west. It was organized in 1868 by an order of the board of supervisors, Metzger Granger was the first supervisor. The first settler in this place was Elijah Brown, who located on section 21. Shortly after this Francis Nash, M. W. Farnsworth and John Peacock came with their families. The first school was opened in 1869 with 13 pupils in attendance. Elijah Brown brought the first mail into the township. It was but a brief period until the whole section was swept over with the fire of '71 and then again by that of '81. The people had difficulty in even saving their lives as the terrific blaze came rushing along like the waters of a great sea, destroying everything in its course. The "slashings" with the heaps of dead limbs and knots, the results of lumber camps were regular tinder boxes and the flames rolled from 20 to 50 feet in height. In many places trenches were dug, the women and children placed in them, covered over with boards and wet blankets while the men fought the fire to save their lives. It is impossible to describe such a scene. Only the participators can have any adequate idea of what it really was like. The late Col. Bope, of Bad Axe, described his thrilling experience in this fire

at a meeting of the Pioneer and Historical Society. He said it was so dark at mid-day that the people thought the day of judgment had come. Everything had such a wierd look amid smoke and flame. Such experiences were the lot of all who chanced to be in the track of the fire monster.

The county poor farm is located in this township near the eastern line and about one mile west of Bad Axe. It consists of about 200 acres of land for which the county paid \$600. The site at the time was all wild land. Thomas Morrow was appointed the first overseer and by 1876 had cleared off 25 acres of the land. The following year the house was built. Mr. Morrow resigned in 1882 and William Tahash was his successor for a few years then William Story was appointed overseer.

Among the pioneers of this section of the county we find W. H. McDowell, who bought 720 acres of land in 1878, and Oliver Haley, who came in the spring of 1866. D. H. T. Williams was another resident who secured a grant of 160 acres of land under the Homestead law. Mr. Williams served in the Civil War, enlisting in 1861. He came to Colfax in 1873. The township was named after the running mate of President Grant. The first school house here was built by Francis Nash. In the spring of '71, Hon. J. C. Waterbury, then a member of the State Legislature, obtained from the state an appropriation to build the Sand Beach and Sebewaing highway, and also succeeded in getting George W. Pack appointed as commissioner. Rudolph Papst, of Lexington, conducted the survey. At that date the whole interior of the county was an unbroken forest, the favorite resort of sportsmen and trappers, who made the beautiful spring north of Bad Axe their tenting ground. Here George Martin and Jerome Sharp built a shanty and furnished it with articles necessary for the chase. When in the progress of their work Messrs. Pack and

Papst reached this vicinity they visited this cabin in which they passed the night. Here they found the now historical axe which was old and broken by use in removing the horns of elk and deer. One of the party took the axe, made a drawing of it upon a large tree at a point where the road crosses the line between the townships of Verona and Colfax. He then drove the axe into the tree writing underneath the present name of the city, Bad Axe. This spot was called Bad Axe corners for a number of years. This record of naming the place is taken from an old paper of that date.

### LOCATING THE COUNTY SEAT

At the annual meetings of the Board of Supervisors, October 15, 1872, W. W. Whitelam in the midst of a heated discussion between the towns for a permanent location of the county seat offered a resolution which on motion of Mr. Hanselman, seconded by Mr. Scott was carried by a handsome majority, designating the present site of the county seat of Huron County. Woods & Co. donated the county 40 acres to be used for county purposes. During the coming summer the contract was let to "Sep" Irwin for clearing the site and erecting a temporary building for the use of the county until the completion of a brick court house. Mr. Irwin had the building ready for the October meeting of the Board of Supervisors in 1873. This was the only building within several miles and the members of the board brought bedding with them and boarded in a temporary shanty erected for that purpose. In the fall of that same year Mr. Irwin commenced the erection of a large hotel which was destroyed in the fire of '81. It has been replaced by the present hotel Irwin. Mr. Irwin thus describes the fire which nearly swept everything before it: "In 1881 the 4th of September, which happened to be my birthday, we had this second fire. About 11 o'clock the fire was about two miles west of us. I came in just before

dinner and said to my wife—"You had better get the girls over to the court house. We are going to have a big fire and there will be no chance to get away." Well, they went to the court house. My son, who was about 17 or 18 had been to the west fighting the fire. He came in and as he was very hot took off his shoes and left them just outside. It so happened that after the fire came the boy had no shoes. My wife was undaunted by our loss and said: "We will have to build again." With all the energy we had we went to work and built the second house." Just after Mr. Irwin completed the first building L. Mathews put up a building in which he carried on a general store. The following season Robert Philp built a store which was burned in the fire of '81. Mr. Philp immediately rebuilt and in 60 days his business was in running order, building completed, stocked and trade in full operation. Being away from all means of transportation, either by rail or water, the town of Bad Axe had but slow growth for the first seven years. The population at the end of that time was only 179. The post office was first opened about three miles west on the state road. This was in 1868 and the mail was carried in on the back of a horse and received but once a week. The people of today can hardly appreciate what it means to live in an isolated town with few mail facilities. Chas. Brown was the first postmaster, retaining this office until 1875 when "Sep" Irwin was appointed. The pioneer paper was the "Backwoodsman", started by Belle Irwin in 1876. In 1880 it was sold and the name changed to the "Huron Tribune", George A. Maywood and John Maywood being the proprietors. Later John Maywood had entire control of the plant. The Bad Axe Democrat was started by E. J. Diamond and later sold to Jacob Rorick.

Among the pioneer lawyers we find the names of Hiram Chipman, W. T. Bope, George Maywood and Mr. Carpenter. Mr. Chipman came to Bad Axe Aug. 3, 1875 and was prominently identified with the growth and de-

velopment of law in that town. He told the story of that day in these words: "When I arrived in Bad Axe there were just 18 people living there. The first man I saw was "Sep" Irwin sweeping off his steps. There were very few settlers and they were all Canadians as far as I could find out. Good, generous sort of fellows. When the fire of '81 burned this village I was coming down main street by the hotel, or where the Irwin hotel had been, now a heap of ruins and ashes. Mr. Irwin had men engaged in putting up a barn. As I passed by I heard "Sep" Irwin say "he-yo-he"! Phoenix-like he was there raising a barn over those ashes. I thought that is the spirit of our people. No matter if you do burn them up the next thing you hear is "He-yo-he"!"

Mr. Chipman was elected prosecuting attorney of the county in 1881. W. T. Bope came to Bad Axe in January 1879 and established his business in company with George W. Carpenter with whom he was associated for one year. Later he was associated with Hiram L. Chipman. Mr. Bope was the first president of the Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society and always took an active part in its welfare until ill health compelled him to resign his position. "Col." Bope was intensely interested in the county's pioneer days and in one of his addresses before the society said: "We hope that children in their cradles today may be 50 years hence continuing the work of this Historical Society." He was elected president emeritus of the society at the annual meeting of 1918, which position he held until his death in the winter of 1919.

Among the men prominent in the early affairs of the county we find two especially deserving of mention—Richard Smith and Charles E. Thompson. Mr. Smith came to Port Austin at the close of the Civil War in company with a comrade who had been with him in the army. They purchased 120 acres on which they spent the winter. In the spring Mr. Smith worked in

Port Austin a couple of months, then entered the employment of Chas. B. Cotterell whose name is also on the pioneer roll. From the fall of 1866 he held various offices in county affairs for 12 years moving to Bad Axe in 1873, living there until 1877, when he opened an abstract office in Port Austin. Mr. Thompson came to Huron County with his parents in 1854, being absent only during the time he was in school in Detroit. He worked in New River, Port Hope and Huron City until he was nominated and elected county clerk in 1876 on the Republican ticket. Held this office two terms. In 1880 he was elected county treasurer for two terms and in 1884 he was elected register of deeds, holding this office six years. C. D. Thompson is his son and ranks high as a county historian. He held the office of president of the Huron County Pioneer and Historical Society and aided in getting the system of county parks organized.

Thomas Morrow, who built the Morrow House in 1883 came to Port Austin with his parents in 1854. He was overseer of the county farm for seven years and also foreman in lumber camps for several years.

Among the early physicians were W. H. Deady, M. C. McDonnell, H. Gale, E. C. David and J. B. Dixon. Bad Axe is well known today to all the medical fraternity as the home of the late Dr. Herrington, whose fame as a surgeon was not confined to this state.

B. F. Scott was one of the enterprising men of that period locating here in 1879. He manufactured lumber and flour, had a large elevator and did a general merchandise business. At that time he cut about 3,000,000 feet of lumber annually. Reuben Rapson had a wagon shop, which he started in 1874. In the jewelry trade were W. S. Small and N. I. Cummings. E. A. Johnson was the proprietor of a harness shop. George C. Clark had a grain elevator, J. S. Deady and J. M. Honey, drugs; F. H. Krause, furniture. Blacksmith shops, Chas.

McAvoy and Reuben Rapson. Planing mill, Belle Irwin; hardware, L. C. Truax and Jas. Stillwell; meat market, Andrew & Son and Kelley Bros.; shoe shops, C. Foster and J. S. Emery; real estate, the Maywood Bros. The millinery shop was conducted by Rossiter & Brower. Other well known men in Bad Axe were O'Dell & Collins, George Smiley, Jas. E. Roberts and J. A. Morgan. Mr. Morgan was born in Wales and came to America in 1848. He was a tailor by trade and was noted as a superior workman in that line of business. He came to Bad Axe in 1877, erected a building and established a fine trade there. After his death his daughter, Miss Ruth Morgan, successfully carried on the business for several years. She was an excellent buyer, a better seller and altogether an admirable example of what a woman can accomplish when she sets out to do for herself. His other two children, W. T. Morgan and Miss Mary, have been identified with the best interests of Bad Axe for many years. Miss Mary is now the only member of the family living. She is an influential member of the Pioneer and Historical Society and has served on the executive committee ever since its inception. It is worthy of note that she has lived in the same house continuously for over 43 years. She has charge of the public library of Bad Axe and makes a most efficient librarian.

The site upon which Bad Axe is built is an elevated plateau sloping gradually on all sides into low bottom lands. The soil consists of a gravelly loam with substratum of gravel. The nature of the soil is such that it absorbs the heaviest rain in the course of a few hours, leaving the ground as dry and pleasant as before the shower, yet the soil is sufficiently retentive of moisture for the growth of good gardens and beautiful lawns. Stretching away from the city is a broad acreage of fine farming land.

Very early in the history of Bad Axe the people turned their attention to religious matters and the various societies began the work which has resulted in the

establishment of several fine churches. In the Huron County News of 1883 we read the following item: "A Presbyterian church was organized in Bad Axe with 26 members by the Rev. John Kay and E. P. Clark. The following persons were chosen elders: Donald McTaggart, of Sheridan, John McKenzie, of Colfax, Mr. Rapson, Sr., of Verona and Donald Shaw, of Paris, thus representing four townships. Many of the members of this organization resided quite a distance from the town and this fact led to the disbandment of the society later on." Finally the United Presbyterians established a society in 1881. Another paper states that the First Presbyterian church was organized in 1878 under the labors of Rev. J. Beecher. The first church had seats around the wall. The choir generally used these while the congregation often utilized cord wood for seats. When they had evening services each family brought a lamp to light the room. After the fire of '81 the services were held in the homes. The present church edifice was completed in 1900 and has a seating capacity of 500 with basement under the entire building. Dr. Fulton was the chief factor in building up a fine organization in Bad Axe. The Westminster Society celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1919. Of the first members of this organization only four remain: Mrs. Burgess, Miss Mary Morgan, Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. C. E. Thompson. Rev. Robert Brown is the present pastor.

The Methodist Episcopal church was organized in 1878 under the labors of Rev. George Walker and two years later a class of 13 was established. Mr. and Mrs. Durfy and Mr. and Mrs. Williams were members of this class. The senior member being Thomas O'Dell. The first church building was erected in 1883. Before that the parsonage was used as a place of worship. As the society increased in members, needs and resources, the old church was outgrown and a more capacious building became necessary. In the spring of 1899 under the direction of Rev. J. W. Campbell ground was broken for a new building. It was eventually completed and

dedicated June 17, 1900, E. A. Moore, pastor, at a cost of \$11,000. This society has had a steady growth and is now one of the best appointments on the Port Huron District. Both church and parsonage have all modern equipments. Rev. Frank H. Cookson is pastor at the present date.

The Baptist church was organized in 1878 with eight members. Rev. Alfred Amey was the pastor. In 1879 the first church was built at a cost of \$2,500. This was due largely to the unflagging interest and great zeal of the faithful membership. Only one year later the great fire of '81 that nearly wiped Bad Axe off the map burned this structure. Under the energetic leadership of Rev. James McArthur the present house of worship was erected at a cost of \$3,000. The parsonage was built in 1897 under the pastorate of Rev. C. T. Jack. This society is also in a prosperous condition today and has an important part in the religious life of the city. Rev. Drury Martin is the present pastor.

St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal church was established as early as 1880 by holding services in the school house under the care of Rev. W. H. Smythe. The church building of this society was completed in 1882 and a rectory built in 1883.

Some Catholic families settled in Verona long before the village of Bad Axe was founded, but for many years they had no place of worship. To the zeal and activity of the late Joseph Murray may be credited the forming of the present well organized and flourishing parish. In his home in early days the few Catholic settlers would gather to meet the missionary priests who came to say mass for them. Not until 1885 was any effort made to have services in Bad Axe. At this time Rev. George Langel established a mission and once a month came from Ruth to have mass in the home of Mr. McAvoy. The society prospered and it became necessary to rent a hall to accommodate the growing membership. In 1888 the people decided to erect a

church and the following committee was appointed to look after the work: Joseph Murray, Michael Scully, Chas. McAvoy and Michael Holland. The present church is the result of their efforts, assisted by Martin Conaton and Dr. M. C. McDonell. A rectory has been built since then and the church building remodeled and renovated.

The people of Bad Axe have been instrumental in establishing an excellent school system and now have a high school building that is up to date in every respect. The district is a fractional one embracing parts of the townships of Verona and Colfax. It was incorporated some years ago by the state legislature.

In 1882 an impetus was given to the growth of the town by the entrance of a railroad—the western branch of the Port Austin and Northwestern was completed through Bad Axe to Port Austin. Later the Saginaw, Tuscola and Huron division connected Bad Axe and Saginaw. The Pere Marquette has control of this road now. The Grand Trunk railroad entered the town from Cass City in 1913.

### BAD AXE WIPED OUT BY FIRE

The village of Bad Axe suffered greatly from the terrific fire that swept over the county in 1881. That destructive element left only 21 buildings of all descriptions. Soon afterward there were 110 residences besides the business houses, thus showing the indomitable spirit and energy of the people. B. L. Scott has no peer in this county for genuine push and no man has done more for the town than he, says a paper of that period. He has given employment to many men and is helping build up the village by furnishing lumber for the town. Today some of these men are still living in Bad Axe and are able to tell the story of those strenuous times.

Thomas Martin cut the first tree down just where the Hotel Irwin is situated in June 1864, and camped on the site of George Andrews' house. The next morn-

ing one of the party shot a deer a few rods from there.

Worthy of mention among those who settled in this county is the name of Dean Cutler, now of Bad Axe. He has lived over 71 years amid its stirring scenes. His father visited this place when it was a wilderness to see a Mr. Peacock, whose hip was out of joint.

James Baldwin was another man who did his part nobly in the transition of Bad Axe from a forest to a progressive city. He came to the county in 1868 and to Bad Axe in 1887, where he conducted a hardware business in partnership with James Stillwell. He was elected register of deeds in 1888. He held this office six years.

Another man who witnessed the inception and evolution of Bad Axe was J. A. Wright. The first dwelling house in the town is said to have been built by a lawyer, James Skinner, still living in the town. We wish to mention among the names of early pioneers that of A. L. Wright, who filled many places of trust and responsibility. He was a resident of the county when but a boy. His original homestead being on the state road four miles southwest of Bad Axe. When in his teens there was no school in his immediate district so he attended one a mile away at one time walking that distance for several months on a crutch. He was a real estate dealer, banker and farmer.

James Nugent and Joseph Fremont are men who have also contributed their share toward the development of the town. The pioneer shoeman of Bad Axe was Calvin Foster. He also served his country in the Civil War, enlisting in the 10th Michigan Infantry with which he served until the close of that struggle.

The site of the town is on a gravelly ridge about four miles in length and half a mile wide. It used to be a famous hunting place for the Indians in early days. W. T. Bope told this incident of his experience with some of the Indians: One of them always had Mr. Bope take care of his money. Instead of a bank book or receipt this Indian would cut as many notches on a stick as he

gave dollars to Mr. Bope. When he wanted his money back he would present the notched stick. This mode of banking seemed to work satisfactorily if it was primitive.

Many of the early inhabitants of Bad Axe have passed away but their memory still lingers and the story of their labors is best told by the religious, educational, political and industrial institutions which they had part in establishing and which shall continue long after the granite memorial which marks their last resting place has grown moss covered with the passing years.

### GORE TOWNSHIP

The next township to which we wish to direct attention is that of Gore, so named because it resembles in shape that part of a lady's dress. It was organized from Rubicon in 1862 with John H. Tucker as supervisor, George Allen, clerk, and Robert Hunter, treasurer. It is a small township and the history of the people's early life is one with Rubicon and its soil and advantages are about the same. The fire of '81 caused much suffering and the entire township was burned over. Port Hope was the market for all produce from the farms. It's long shore line affords superior water facilities and makes the site of the township an attractive one.

### SIGEL TOWNSHIP

Directly west of Sand Beach township lies that of Sigel. It was organized some time prior to 1864 with Watson Robinson as the first supervisor on the records. He took up 80 acres of land under the homestead act that same year. In the fire of '81 all of his buildings and crops were destroyed. He found himself the morning after the fire without a hat or shoes and practically destitute of clothing of any kind. With his accustomed energy and enterprise he began at once to rebuild and repair as far as possible the damage done by the fire.

The first settlers in this township were Fred Jurgess, Joseph Lakowski and Waterhouse Whitelam, who came in 1859. Samuel Williams was another pioneer in this section of the county. In the early lumbering days he had worked for Pack, Woods & Co., at Harbor Beach and later at Port Crescent. He moved on to his farm in Sigel soon after the fire of '71 and by diligence and hard labor transformed this piece of land from the wilderness that it was in 1874 to the modern country home of the present day.

The land in this township is flat except in the western part. The soil is sand and clay mixed. This section did not develop or increase in population in proportion to other townships. The three early schools were located on sections 24, 22 and 7. The Lutherans were the first to establish churches here.

Running through the township is the east branch of Willow Creek. The fire of '81 passed over the entire township and that of '81 burned the northern part. The original timber was pine, cedar, hemlock and hard wood. Bad Axe was the nearest railway station and the nearest port, Sand Beach, now Harbor Beach.

### SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP

Sheridan township lies in the southern tier. It was named after General Sheridan and was organized at the annual meeting of the board of supervisors, October 9, 1886, out of the following territory, formerly belonging to Bingham: Town 15 N. of R. 12 E. John McIntosh was the first supervisor. He came in 1859 when that section was but a wilderness. For the first settlers in the fifties were the Campbells, Morrisons, McKinnons, McPhails, McIntyres, McTaggarts, Shaws, Buchanans and Whillans. They were followed by the Camerons, Baties, McLellans, Lietchs, Fletchers, Robbins, McCahans, Crofts, Allis, Sweeneys, Clarks, Hendersons, McAlpines, Alex Gillies, Peter McInnis, Thomas Sherwood, J. B.

Wilson, Angus McIsaac, H. Stoddard, John Thompson, James McMillan, John Bishop and Joseph Reily, an Indian who owned a farm and in 1867 had six acres under cultivation. The settlers with the exception of two families were Scotch Highlanders who first emigrated into Canada and from there to Sheridan. They were very industrious, hospitable and strongly attached to their religion. The five McTaggart brothers, with their two sisters, came in 1858 and located land. A. O'Henley was a later settler coming in 1875 and purchasing 320 acres of land. Here we also find the McAlpine family as well as that of Addison Boomhower, who came in 1869 and located 160 acres of land. After the fire of '71 he went to Ohio for a year and a half. Since that time he has been a resident of the township. In those early days as elsewhere lumbering was the chief industry, five companies being at work at one time in this place. The land was covered with a heavy growth of hemlock, cork pine of huge dimensions, beech, sugar maple and other hardwood trees. The task of the pioneer in clearing such land was a tremendous one. The soil is a rich gravelly loam, intermixed with a little clay and fine particles of limestone. The land is rolling in the south and west and flat in the north and east part of the township. The people gave early attention to schools and churches. The first term of school was held in district No. 1 with Mrs. E. Wilson as teacher. Catholic services were held in a cabin half under ground in 1866. The Frazer Presbyterians also held services that same year. The Erskine Presbyterian church was organized about 1892. The first roads as elsewhere were merely trails through the woods. Now they have miles of state roads. This township suffered much from the great fires of '71 and '81 but in time all traces of these terrific conflagrations passed away and today we find fine farms with well appointed farm houses. The entire township is given over to agricultural pursuits, there being no village within its limits. The principal rivers are the Pigeon and the tributaries of the Cass. Millions of logs at one time were banked along these streams.

## LAKE TOWNSHIP

Lake township was organized in 1867 by special act of the legislature. Its territory was taken from that of Grant and Caseville. John B. Woodhull was the first supervisor and Robert Gotts clerk. There were 21 voters at the first election. The first settler was William Fisher in 1859. Robert Gotts and Hannah Davison were the first couple married in the township in 1866. Mr. Gotts told the following story of his coming into this section: "I had a longing to own a bit of this green earth, so came here in 1864. I found my land was three miles from the nearest neighbor. Had to cut a trail through the woods, which took several days. Built a small shanty, got in some provisions and settled down for a long winter of solitary life. Owing to a mistake in locating the lands by the parties who helped me, found the next spring that I had chopped on the wrong land all winter. Had to begin all over again. For many years there were no bridges across the Pigeon river, so often in the winter time had to break the ice where it was not frozen hard enough to bear the weight of a man and wade or pole a raft across with the necessary supplies. As soon as I had a clearing large enough to raise grain I bought two and one-half bushels of spring wheat for \$3.00 per bushel. Had to carry it on my back for four miles, then plant it with a hoe. The next year sowed 12 bushels of oats which I also carried in, bringing two bushels at a time. Generally the implements the pioneer had were an axe, hoe, hand spike, shovel and a grindstone, until the fires of '71 and '81 let in the sunshine and the wind. This made it possible to burn the timber more easily. The problem in those days was not how to get timber, but how to get rid of it. The first school was organized in 1864. The first Sunday school was started by three men who leaned toward the Presbyterian church, the Primitive Methodists and the Church of England. These three promoters asked the people to bring their Bibles. When Sunday came the school house was full. Then came a

problem. Who would open the session with prayer? Finally they solved the question by repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Apostle's Creed. Some one suggested that they have singing, so the Scotchman selected a hymn out of the Westminster hymnal and the first Psalm. The Sunday school proved to be a success, but the school house burned in the fire of '81 and that ended the work."

Lake township is drained by the Pigeon and Pinebog rivers. The soil is a clay loam except along the shore. About one-third of the township was touched by the great fires of '71 and '81. William Dufty bought 160 acres of land in 1865. He married Mary Ann Smith, who with her parents came to Caseville township from Pennsylvania in 1861. Two families settled in Lake in 1859—Thomas McCormick and Archie McIlhargey. When we read this early date we have but a faint conception of what life then meant in a dense wilderness. Take away the roads and bridges and every vestige of the white man's improvements and restore the wooded territory of 1859 and then imagine these pioneers with their families, effects and whatever fortune they might possess embarking oft times on a rudely constructed "jumper" drawn by a team of oxen, making the irksome journey over winding trails into the land of their future homes. Here surrounded by the trees of the forest in which wild animals abounded they made the little clearings and built the log cabins. There were days of privation and scanty fare but many of them lived to see this region rise from agree swamps and tangled forests into the charms of health and vast prosperity. Even as late as 1874 Mr. Musselman in the woods near his home killed two cubs and attacked the old bear but she showed fight and he had to flee for his life.

Among these early settlers we find the names of M. C. Smalley, George Henry, Samuel Lewis, H. Champagne, Ingraham Harrison and Lewis H. Guyeau, whose life history would tell many incidents of that period. Rush Lake is situated in this township, just south of the Babbitt Quarries. It was originally about two and one-

half miles long and about a mile wide. This lake is somewhat higher than Lake Huron, which is within a mile of it but direct drainage is prevented by the ridge of sand stone between them. There is a large island in this lake and some fish. A splendid quality of high bush huckleberries grow on the island which is thickly covered with a growth of spruce and other shrubs, making it difficult to go in any direction other than along the trails which form a maze as they zigzag to every point of the compass. The ground is mossy and yielding except where the roots of the trees so near the surface form a net work. Many wild fowl come here in the fall as it is a natural habitat for water birds. In late years drains running east towards the Pinnebog and west to the Pigeon rivers have lowered the level of the lake and reduced its size. Along its shores the Upthegrove families settled and the home of Mr. Chapman was near the Babbitt Quarries. He was one of the early teachers in the Caseville school.

### CHANDLER TOWNSHIP

Chandler township was organized in 1879. Its territory was taken from that of Lake. Wilson Smith was the first supervisor. Thomas Edwards, who came in 1860 is said to be the first settler. The land is rolling in the north and east and flat in the south and west. It is drained by the Pinnebog and Pigeon rivers and has no waste land. There are no large villages in this township. The entire section is given over to agricultural purposes and there are some excellent farms in this part of the county. Beans, clover hay, wheat and corn being the principal products. Sugar beets are also raised in some parts of the township.

The little village of Soule is on the east branch of the Pinnebog river. In 1876 John Soule came to that section and purchased two acres on which the village is situated. Chas. Soule built a grist mill, saw mill and store on this site. The settlement which gathered

around these buildings naturally took Mr. Soule's name. He was also instrumental in having the township of Chandler organized and named in honor of the then senator from Michigan. Edward McKay came to the township in 1878 and purchased 160 acres on section 24. He became one of the leading agriculturists and later increased his estate by purchasing another 160 acres in section 25. On the east boundary of the township is a splendid Catholic church with a large membership. This point is called Hewletton. The priest from here at the present day cares for the Caseville Catholic church also. The first Protestant religious services were held in the home of Ralph McCoul, by Rev. Mr. Cross, a Methodist preacher in 1868. Two brothers, John and James Bedford came in the early 50's and settled in the township. James afterwards sold his land to his cousin, James Bedford. William Hedley was another pioneer, coming in 1867. Other settlers in the '60's were Thomas and Anthony Green, Dan Hart, John Howardth, Robert Smith, Darling Anderson, Mr. Nichols, the Harveys, Daniel Langley, Obed Melick, the Devines, the Lenaways and Christian Flack.

To merely mention these sturdy pioneers gives but little idea of the hardships and privations they endured in establishing homes for their families. These men and many others not mentioned were chiefly instrumental in the transformation of the township from a wilderness to a region of fruitful farms and comfortable homes. Many of them carried in on their backs the necessary provisions for the sustenance of their families. Often walking on logs through swamps and over trails tormented by those pests, the mosquitoes, which swarmed in clouds around them. Even the homes were besieged by these insects with their buzzing noise. A "smudge" was to be seen at every door in those days.

Among the men who did much to develop this section the name of Edward Heaton is worthy of mention. He located 320 acres of land under the Graduation act.

He lumbered in the early years and later through his energy and enterprise had one of the finest stock farms in the county. He raised the first grain, owned the first team of horses and wagon in Chandler township. He bought his farm implements in Detroit and Lexington and for many years owned the only fanning mill in the settlement.

In the '70's we find these names on the roll in Chandler: Maxwells, Youngs, Thompsons, McLeods, Brooks, Wilsons, Fitchetts, Hays, Alexanders, Thomas Farver and the Sawyers. Several of these families were Scotch and where they lived was known as the Scotch settlement. They were nearly all adherents of the Presbyterian church.

### OLIVER TOWNSHIP

In 1879 Oliver township seceded from Lake and the first election was held in April of that year. Frank Black was chosen supervisor. This township did not suffer as much from the great fires as did the others. It is drained by the Pinnebog river. Among its early settlers were S. D. Grimmey and John Oliver, after whom the township is named. Patrick Bliss, who located here in early days carried in the first cook stove for his own use, on his back, making four trips to bring the various pieces from Caseville. The roads in this section were mere trails through the forest at this period. The first school in the township was taught by Miss Agnes McAulay, of Caseville. Among her pupils were the children of Mr. McGillivray, who built the first house in Elkton. His family were the first to settle there. Mr. McGillivray was a blacksmith by trade and is still a resident of the village. It is said that the village got its name from the fact of an elk being killed in a marsh nearby that weighed a ton. Mr. Dennis F. Smith tells of cutting hay in this same marsh in 1859. He worked for Hanks, Thompson and Butters, the father of John Butters, who

were engaged in lumbering. Also worked for Francis Crawford on the Pigeon river at the Burrit Shanties in 1860 and 1861.

## GRANT TOWNSHIP

South of Oliver is Grant township, named after Gen. Grant. It was organized in 1867 by an order from the board of supervisors. Levi Williamson was not only the first supervisor but the first settler, coming in 1863. Other names inseparably connected with this township's history are those of the Lambkins, Eamleys, Bodeys, Brackenberry's, Tellers, Parkers, Hallocks, O'Neals, Hinton and the Proudfoot family. This township is drained by the Pigeon river and the Sheboyonk Creek. The timber was largely maple, beech, pine, elm and hemlock. The soil is clay loam in some parts and in others sandy with clay as a subsoil. There is some choice farming land here. It is estimated that there were at least 6,000 acres of swamp land in this township.

The first post office was at Canboro with Mr. Parker as postmaster. He also had a general store. This post office was established in 1870 with semi-weekly mails from Sebawaing and Bad Axe. The office was discontinued when the rural free delivery took its place with routes extending from Gagetown in Tuscola county and from Owendale, a village on the Grand Trunk railway and situated in Brookfield. This village was named after Mr. Owen, who was the principal factor in its early history.

Many of the men who settled in Grant township in the '60's had served in the Civil War, hence the name, Grant.

The eastern part of the township was the first to be settled. Here we find two families of the Keatings. A member of one of these families was among the earliest preachers in this locality. The Aldrich family built a home on the town line and an odd character by the name

of Miner lived on the bank of the Pinnebog river. Many of these early settlers traveled on foot to Caseville to purchase supplies. On one occasion William Younglove and Mr. Stretcher made a trip to Caseville together. They carried their purchases home in bags and when they came to a creek or river would throw the bags over and then follow the best way they could. One of these men had several dishes which his wife had ordered in his sack. On coming to the river he tossed it over, forgetting all about the frailty of his ware. Too late he realized what would happen. He found but one cup intact when he reached the other side.

James Proudfoot's father moved from York State to Grant, just before the great fire of 1871. Came from Caro to Gagetown by stage and made the remainder of the journey in a lumber wagon. The next day started to Bay City for his household goods, going from Sebewaing in the boat, the Mary Mastina. Shortly after leaving there the boat ran on to a sand bar and it was several hours before the crew could get her off. In the meantime the great fire had swept into the vicinity of his home in Grant and all that night his family fought for their lives and home. They succeeded in saving everything after a strenuous struggle.

The first teacher in District No. 1 was Mrs. Gage in 1872 and Bell Randolph taught the next term in 1873.

## BROOKFIELD TOWNSHIP

Brookfield township was organized in 1867 and the first election held at the residence of A. H. Burton in April, 1868. Elijah Thompson had the honor of being the first supervisor. Mr. Burton was the first settler, locating there in 1865, and was also a prime mover in the organization of the township. In recognition of his efforts he was allowed to select the name. This he did naming the place after his old home in York state. He was also the first clerk of the township. W. Pobanz was

another pioneer in this section, coming in 1870 and that same year Mr. Schnepf purchased land and built a house. In 1865 Hiram Spitler took up a homestead of 120 acres. Other well known men were the Holmes families who settled in this and adjoining townships. The land is generally flat with a clay loam soil. It is drained by the Sheboyonk Creek and the Pigeon river. In recent years large drains have been cut throughout the township. The fires of '71 and '81 just touched the corner of this section.

### BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP

Bloomfield township was organized in 1872 and William E. Elliot elected supervisor. The fire of '71 swept over two-thirds of this township and the fire of '81 caused much suffering and loss. Clinton Gage came to Bloomfield in 1875 and he saved the lives of his family in the great fire of '81 by getting under a wet carpet for several hours. Later in the day another family, that of Mr. Gregor also took refuge under this same covering. The whole atmosphere seemed to be filled with smoke and fire. The first clearing made in this section was by Henry B. Gillard, who came in 1871. Ronald McDonald also located here in that same year. He was a Scotchman by birth but had spent several years in India. He served in the Crimean War two years and was a soldier in India in the English Army 19 years. He married the daughter of another English soldier in Secunderabad and here his son, Harry McDonald, was born. The writer has heard him relate many thrilling experiences that befell him in that far off land. Two well known men who settled in Bloomfield in the 70's were Hugh Walker and Robert Beattie. Another early settler was John Clark, who served as justice of the peace for over 20 years. In 1878 Lewis W. Coon came and settled in the township. There were other men belonging to this period whose names are not recorded.

The life of all of these early settlers was full of toil and hardships. Their first task after putting up the log cabin home was to clear and break up the virgin soil, then put in the crops so necessary for their sustenance. No easy task amid the stumps. Potatoes were the main crop then. The land in this township is flat and a sandy loam soil. It is drained by the east and west branches of Willow Creek. Port Hope was the nearest market. The little hamlet of Redman is situated in this township and John Kinch, who came in 1876, was one of the postmasters there. The M. E. church was organized in 1883. There were also two Baptist churches and one Episcopal society.

### MEADE TOWNSHIP

In 1869 Meade township was organized from Hume. At the election in April Spencer A. Case was elected supervisor. The first settlers were Peter Rivers and Anthony Libby, who came in the spring of 1859, and Chas. Gilbert, V. Nelson and J. Martin came in the fall. In 1861 Desire Filion located here and a couple of years later started a store. Filion is named after him. J. Fleming came in 1867. Leonard R. Thomas came from Warwick, Ont., in 1878 and settled in this township. He afterwards represented Huron county in the state legislature and served many years as supervisor. Other early settlers were Chas. Armstrong, son of the first sheriff of the county, and also of Huron, St. Clair and Sanilac, when they were one. John Lackie, whose son William is the present supervisor of Meade; D. McAlpine, two families of the Nelsons, who originally came from Norway and William and George Kerr. Mr. Kerr always took an active part in the affairs of the township. Joseph Jeroue came to Meade in 1859 and purchased land. Felix Filion, who settled here in 1876 had made a trip to Huron County in 1859, purchasing land in Caseville township but on account of the ague returned to Canada, residing there until 1860 when he came to Hume, but

in 1862 entered the Union Army. On receiving his discharge he once more came to Hume, remaining until 1869, then went to Canada, where he lived six years. In 1876 he came back to Port Austin for one year then moved to Meade where he established a home. Another pioneer family was that of A. Lipsic. They built a palisade around their garden and orchard of cedar posts, pinned together and sharpened at the top. No deer could enter here to destroy the crop. The Methodist church in this township was built in 1881, after much sacrifice and toil on the part of the builders. The first child born in Meade was a son of Chas. Gilbert. The land here is rolling in the northern part and flat in the southern. The clay loam soil is easily tilled and produces good crops. The east branch of the Pinnebog river drains this township. The fire of '71 and '81 touched this township and did much damage especially that of '81. The township is named after General Meade. The nearest trading place is Pinnebog, which lies partly in the township.

### LINCOLN TOWNSHIP

Another township named after a president is that of Lincoln, organized in 1877. The first election held at the home of George Collins resulted in the election of Desire Filion as supervisor. The first settler was John H. Prevorse, who came in 1865 and endured all the labors and hardships of pioneer life. We can imagine how great these trials were when we read the records in the register's office that the first mortgage foreclosed in the county was when the John H. Prevorse farm was sold on foreclosure to Robert W. Irwin, August 2, 1875. Richard Winsor was the attorney in the proceeding and Hugh M. Ross, deputy sheriff, carried on the sale. In fact Mr. Ross handled most of the sales on foreclosures for a number of years. In the year 1885 we find 25 such sales. Among the early settlers in this township we find the names of Leon Filion, B. C. Church, W. H. Park-

er, Ronald McDonald, John D. Parent and later Anthony Tetreau who purchased and established the farms afterwards called Tetreau's Corner. The whole township was burned over in the fire of '71 and the eastern side in '81. It is drained by Willow Creek, which empties into Lake Huron. Here as in other parts of the county broad fields and comfortable homes now occupy the ground where once the wolf and wild deer trod.

Many of the sturdy, hardy pioneers who viewed these scenes of early days have passed away and the story of their adventures sounds like some fairy tale of old.

### WINSOR TOWNSHIP

Winsor township was organized in 1880 from Fair Haven. It was named after Richard Winsor, a well known pioneer of the county. The first election was held May 6 and John T. Linson chosen as the first supervisor.

The soil in this township is a clay loam and highly productive. It is drained by the Pigeon River and Sheboyonk Creek.

Among the pioneers of this section was G. U. Bean, who came with his mother and five brothers to Winsor when but 11 years of age. This township was then but a wilderness of green, swampy land. After years of toil and hardship such as early settlers only know he succeeded in making a comfortable home.

John Linson first came to the Ora Labora colony in Caseville township, where he built a tannery and in three years had lost his entire property. He next secured a claim of 160 acres of land in section 15 Winsor township which he held for six years. During the time he had this land he built a small log shanty on it in the midst of the forest. Here one night a large bear tried to get into the building. Mr. Linson had no gun with him and but a latch upon the door of the cabin. He barricaded the door as well as he could and all

that night with an axe in his hand kept watch through the small window upon his unwelcome visitor. The bear prowled round and round the building, snuffling and scratching every now and then upon the door. It was just breaking day when bruin ambled away into the surrounding woods. After that experience Mr. Linson never spent another night there without a gun nearby. He sold his land in 1875, but previous to this purchased a farm on the banks of the Pigeon river. This place is about a half mile west of the town and is now owned by the Michigan Sugar Company. Other pioneer families in Winsor were the Hysers, Warrens, Froebes, Jacobs, Moellers, Kornes, Nitz's, Muenteners, Hoffmans, Draher's, Wassermans, Deitzels and Roedels. Will Kain was a step-son of Mr. Jacobs. The site of Pigeon was a swamp. It is said that 40 acres of land now in the center of the town, was traded for a gun. Berne was unknown. The first school was conducted in the German M. E. church on the banks of the Pigeon river. Here Herman Roedel swayed the rod for a while. Then came Fannie Snell of Bay Port, a niece of J. and T. Snell's, who taught one year. She was followed by Florence M. Morse (now Mrs. Richard Gwinn) who had charge for two years. During the second year the district purchased the building from the M. E. society and a church was built at Berne Corners. Miss Morse was the teacher once more in 1880-82. Among the pupils of that day were the Heineman brothers, who later moved to Saginaw. Mrs. Conrad, Fred and Henry Zimmer, Mrs. Anna Baur, Chas. and Louis Mair, Henry Moeller and John Deifenbach, now of McKinley township. Five months was the entire length of the school year there. Books of all kinds were brought by the pupils and the parents could not understand why these were not all right. Among the interesting events of that time was the wedding of Alice Hyser and William Brown on New Year's day, 1877. Miss Morse and the Froebe family attended this ceremony. It took place at the old Hyser farm, a few miles up the river from where Pigeon is now situ-

ated. The lumber road followed the bank of the river through the woods, if road it might be called. The whole party rode in a wagon with boards on instead of a box and once this vehicle got tangled up with the numerous logs that projected into the highway. Every one had to help get the logs out of the track. On arriving at the Hyser home, which was of course a log building with a wing built on, forming an L-shaped structure, they found that all of the other guests were there. For seats there were benches around the room and in the center a bench on which sat the bride, groom, bridesmaid and best man. Every one had a splendid chance to see the bride's dress which was made of a pretty blue material. At one end of the same room was the long table already spread for the dinner. O. P. Chapin was the officiating justice of the peace. He must have had the dinner in view for the marriage ceremony only lasted about one minute. There was but scant attention paid to the congratulations but rather the guests congratulated themselves on the abundance of good things provided. Plenty of roast goose, honey, pies, cake and other dainties. A dinner like this was a rare treat in those times and nearly every housewife within reach had assisted in its preparation. When it was over it was time to go home for people did not travel in autos in that day.

While we have mentioned the families who settled near Pigeon there were several other settlers near the state road leading from Wild Fowl Bay to Kilmanagh—William Kappen, the Heberlys, Pincombs, Grants, Harders, Rathers, Pobanzs and Graves families.

Another well known pioneer William Holmes, came in 1868 from Lockport, N. Y. He made the journey by means of three teams and sleighs. They traversed lumber roads and finally the last part of the route was traced by means of blazed trees. Such men as these put their axes on their shoulders and marched into the virgin forests and built their homes and their independence

by their own sturdy hands. Mr. Holmes owned 1,000 acres of timber land on which he lumbered for many years. He had a saw mill near the southern line of the township, built in 1881.

### McKINLEY TOWNSHIP

Since that early period McKinley township has been organized. Its territory being taken from that of Caseville, while White Rock has been absorbed into that of Sherman.

### A PIONEER FAMILY OF NOTE

Among the pioneers in Huron county there are those who have been identified with more than one place. Especially deserving of mention is the Desjardins family, who lived for many years in the county. Much of the history of this family is the story of many another who came to the wilds of Huron County after a struggle so overwhelming that it left them stripped of their equipment and compelled them to begin a much greater struggle to regain property and position. In 1856 Gregoire Desjardins left Quebec and came direct to the wilderness of Bingham township. Forestville at that time was the nearest trading post and all goods had to be taken over by ox teams through a winding forest path with its unbridged creeks and swamps. Later a road was built with its old time corduroy bridges and mail carried and other elements of civilization became available. John Zacharie, the oldest son was the mail carrier for many years. Samuel E., who became a noted architect in Chicago, was born while they were waiting at Forestville. Benjamin was the first to arrive at the new hillside home. He became an inventor. Paul, so well known in Huron County, was an older son. He taught school for a few years and then entered Albion college where he trained himself for the ministry.

During the early years the small clearing around the log cabin gradually began to widen, keeping pace with the growth of the family. They had their logging bees at which the neighbors joined to pile up the trees already cut into logs and burn them. The mother and daughters spun the wool and flax. These were sent out and woven and after that they had the fulling bees when the woolen homespun cloth was shrunken. The Desjardins family at the beginning had practically its own school and the Sunday gatherings, the early Sunday school and the study of the Bible extended to the neighbors. It was under these difficulties that this remarkable family was raised. In 1863 Marie, the oldest daughter, married James Shepherd, living one mile and a half across a thick forest. In 1864 Persis, the only one who did not survive her mother, married James M. White, living six miles away. John H. White was her son. On account of the lack of schools Mr. Desjardins moved not far from Port Austin and later to the then thriving village of Port Crescent. It was from this place that three of the boys, Paul, Samuel and Benjamin went to begin their life work. In 1880 Mr. Desjardins sold the property at Port Crescent and purchased a farm near Filion. In 1884 they once more changed their residence going to Bad Axe where they spent the last years of their life.

The father and mother of this family coming to Michigan in middle life never acquired such mastery of the English language as to be able to participate in the religious worship of their neighbors. Mr. Desjardins often opened the session of the first Sunday school they were instrumental in organizing with prayer and reading the scriptures in French, after which such of the neighbors as could read, taught the lesson in English. The descendants of this family numbered nearly 100 at the time Mrs. Desjardins died in 1903. Mr. Desjardins dying 15 years before. This family were no common influence in their day and generation along social, spiritual and intellectual lines.

Another familiar name in the county is that of Robert Winterbottom, who came to Willow Creek in 1855. Here he worked as a sawyer and shingle maker for six or seven years. Then entered the hotel business but lost everything he owned in the great fire of '71. Even his children were left destitute of the necessary clothing. He was compelled to send them to Port Austin where clothing and money had been sent to the fire sufferers by outsiders. After this he worked in various towns in the county, finally in 1876, moved to Port Hope, where he opened a hotel. He was elected sheriff of the county in 1884.

Richard Winsor, the first representative from Huron County in the Michigan Legislature made his campaign over trails in the woods in 1860. He said some of the incidents of that trip would no doubt astonish the present citizens of the county.

In the legislature of 1866 we find H. C. Gallup representing the interests of the people.

### AN EARLY MILLIONAIRE

One of the few millionaires who have lived in Huron County was George W. Pack. At the meeting of the board of supervisors in 1864 he was on the equalization committee and the valuation of the county was \$539,733, Caseville having the highest valuation, \$72,524. It was at this meeting that Port Austin was selected as the county seat.



## CHAPTER IV

# Timber Industries. Early Agriculture.

## LUMBER AND SHINGLES

The people of today can scarcely realize the immense amount of lumbering done in the county for many years. The varied and various branches of that industry; life in the logging camps where men toiled from dawn to dark measuring their accomplishments, not by the eight-hour day but by the possibilities of their efforts. The stories of the cooking, the river driving and the "drives" would all be interesting to the inhabitant of the county today. In the beginning of lumbering here as elsewhere only the cream of the timber was brought to the mills, leaving the rest to be wasted in the fires of later years. In order to give some idea of this industry we give the following statement of the log crop of 1874:

Thomas Snell & Co.	-	-	-	-	-	2,000,000 feet
Bay Port Salt & Lumber Co.	-	-	-	-	-	500,000 feet
F. Crawford	-	-	-	-	-	12,000,000 feet
E. and J. Erskine	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000 feet
Ayres, Learned & Co.	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000 feet
R. B. Hubbard & Co.	-	-	-	-	-	5,000,000 feet
W. R. Stafford	-	-	-	-	-	-1,400,000 feet
Hick & Fuller	-	-	-	-	-	600,000 feet
Pack, Jenks & Co.	-	-	-	-	-	3,000,000 feet
Other parties, small lots	-	-	-	-	-	2,000,000 feet

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Total 36,000,000 feet

The log crop of 1873 was 80,000,000 feet. All logs were floated down the various rivers to the saw mills. Much of the success of getting the drives down depended upon the amount of water in the river in the early spring. All lumber camps were situated upon the banks of creeks or rivers. The logs were marked with the initials of the owners in readiness for the drive in the spring.

### SHINGLE MANUFACTURING

The manufacture of shingles was also an important industry. The shingle mill of Puddock & Co., at Verona, had a record of making 35,000 shingles per day. The amount of wages paid to employees in the village of Caseville during 1874 was over \$7,000 per month.

We find that the earliest location of land in the county was made by Aaron G. Pier, then of St. Clair, on June 18, 1839.

Probably the longest continuous ownership of land is that of the T. J. Philp farm on section 36 Verona township. This land was taken by Mr. Philp's father in 1857 and has been owned and occupied by the family ever since.

The land the county buildings are on was taken by Richard Winsor in 1863 under a land warrant issued to a soldier for service in the war of 1812. The last patent issued in the county was to Richard Gwinn, September 25, 1907, covering land at the foot of Sand Point in Caseville township. It was signed by Theodore Roosevelt, then president of the United States.

### FIRST SETTLERS IN THE COUNTY

The first settlers in the county were John Allen, Alanson and John Daggett in the spring of 1837 at Rock Falls, just below Sand Beach. They had a saw mill there. The first school was opened in Port Austin with Emma

Smith as teacher. As the county began to be settled school districts were organized, log school houses built and a three month term of school secured in the winter. In the earliest times the teacher boarded around. Then the terms lengthened to five months. Finally some of the more progressive districts had a summer term of three months also. The studies generally taught were the three R's, reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic and a little grammar sprinkled in. No language lessons in those primitive times.

### A BIT OF CHURCH HISTORY

The history of the various churches in this county is co-extensive with the history of the county itself. Following the example of the early missionary and with something of the spirit of the heroic age of Methodism the pioneers of that church in the face of the most obstinate difficulties penetrated the dense forests, forded rivers, waded swamps and carried the "bread of life" to the cabins of the very first settlements of the Huron Peninsula. As early as the year 1854 the Methodist minister followed the trail of the lumbermen and laid the foundations of Methodism. Among those heroic men might be mentioned, Varnum Tuttle, Campbell, Bird, and others to whose zeal the church of the present day owes much of its standing and influence. The first circuit extended from Lexington to Bay City and included White Rock, Rock Falls, (now Harbor Beach), Port Hope, Huron City, Port Austin, Port Crescent, Caseville and other early settlements along the shore.

No sooner had some Catholic families settled in the county than that church sent them a man to keep alive in their hearts the eternal truths which they were apt to neglect in the wilderness. By their united efforts they were enabled to build the first church at Port Austin to which belonged 50 families.

The first Baptist church was built at Sand Beach. This society was organized in 1874. In 1882 it had a

membership of 197. A society was organized at both Port Austin and Verona in 1875. The forest fires destroyed many of the houses of worship owned by the Baptists in 1871 and 1881 but with commendable energy and self-sacrifice they rebuilt larger and more commodious buildings.

The first Presbyterian church in the county was organized at Grindstone City under the direction of the Presbytery of Saginaw by Rev. B. B. Woods, of Indianapolis, July 30, 1871. On August 6, 1871 the first Presbyterian church of Port Austin was organized by the same party. This latter church soon after called Rev. E. P. Clark to its pastorate. During his stay of five years the membership increased to 50 and they built a large and substantial house of worship with the aid of the Presbyterian board of church erection. Rev. W. W. Smythe, the Episcopal minister at Port Austin, opened many of the missionary stations of that church in Huron county. The fire of '81 did much to retard the work of this denomination.

Some of the first roads were built along the sand ridges to escape the swamps and bogs. Such was the old Sand Ridge Road from Sebewaing to Harbor Beach, over which a stage coach carried mail and passengers for several years. This was the swiftest means of inland travel. No railroads, telegraphs or telephones or even a daily newspaper, in those good old days. After night-fall the land was lighted by tallow candles. The mower and harvester were unknown. Instead they had the scythe and cradle and to thresh, the flail. The man who could make a good ox yoke was in demand. The settler's equipment consisted of axe helms, beetles and wedges for rail splitting, handspikes for rolling logs. Harrows were made from the crotches of trees. Often men preferred to work in the saw mills rather than clear land for farms which was much harder work and would not bring them money for a long time. Much of the land was low and swampy with no way of draining it. Potatoes were the principal crop as they could be planted between the

stumps. The climate was thought to be too cold for corn. The stock rambled at will through the woods. In many places the marshes proved to be a veritable God-send to the settlers for here he secured his hay for winter. Men would go to these marshes before daylight in order to cut a swathe around the portion they wished to secure.

### THE COMING OF THE RAILROADS

A great event in the history of transportation was the coming of the railroads before which the people had to depend upon water routes for practically all transportation for many years.

The first train to enter the county came over the Port Austin and Northwestern R. R. on September 23, 1880. The Saginaw, Huron and Tuscola R. R. was built as far as Sebewaing in 1883 and the next year extended as far as Bay Port Quarries. The work on the Pontiac, Oxford and Port Austin R. R. was commenced in 1881 and completed in 1883. The road now belongs to the Grand Trunk System, while the other roads mentioned are the property of the Pere Marquette.

The first meeting of the board of supervisors was held at Willow Creek, now Huron City. Hiram Whitcomb was the first justice of the peace in the county, receiving his appointment from Sanilac county.

### FIRST COUNTY OFFICERS

The first officers of Huron County were Robert Irwin, clerk; Wesley Armstrong, sheriff; H. Gallup, prosecuting attorney and Samuel Lander, treasurer.

Records of the first meeting in the county were destroyed by the fire so it is impossible to give a full report of the election of 1860.

## SALT MANUFACTURE

The manufacture of salt was started at Port Austin in 1863. Later there were wells at Port Crescent, Caseville and Port Hope.

Among the things which led to the settlement of the county was the passage of the Graduation Act in 1854. Many of the settlers located their land under this act. Wild lands in Michigan and other states had been on the market for 20 to 40 years without a purchaser. This condition of affairs was brought to the attention of the Congress of the United States and after due deliberation an act was passed to reduce the price of lands on the market for 20 years or more, the price to vary from \$1.00 to 12½ cents per acre, according to a graduated scale, governed by the length of time the land had been on the market. Many of the early settlers thus obtained their land for 25 cents per acre.

Huron county is favorably located. The map reveals that it has the longest shore line of any county in the state with deep waters upon three sides. This water stretch, constantly in motion and coming in contact with the surrounding atmosphere modifies the climate both in summer and winter. Indeed it is a notable fact that the Huron Peninsula enjoys the most delightful autumns of any portion of the whole country. This gives all kinds of fruits and cereals ample opportunity to mature. Its summer resorts are fast becoming noted for the excellent bathing facilities. Tourists come from many places to spend their vacations here.

Agricultural interests have steadily developed, the pioneer gradually giving place to the more advanced farmer and the land which was once only considered valuable for its pine timber has been transformed into excellent farms. The soil and climate are well adapted to the raising of wheat, oats, barley, peas, beans, sugar

beets, corn and potatoes and most kinds of vegetables, while apples, pears, plums and other fruits are successfully grown.

### MARVELOUS CHANGES

The changes that have taken place in the past half century are marvelous. To call this region wild in that early period is to state the fact tamely. Wild beasts roamed the forests and the thick growth of trees shut out the sight of the sky except in the little clearings around the primitive homes. With pleasure and satisfaction we can look back to scenes of pioneer life and contrast them with the present. As these men laid the foundations, firm and deep, so must their sons and daughters carry on and build them up to their final consummation of glory and usefulness. Some one has said that "the pathway they carved out has become the highway upon which the world is traveling, bearing in its train the civilization of the twentieth century, laden with the love of liberty and freedom." In the late war the boys of Huron county did their part in securing freedom not only for this country but for the world. The early pioneers were conquerors not only of men but of nature itself. Through persistent and courageous efforts they subdued the wilderness and made the comforts of civilization possible for the people of today.

(MRS.) FLORENCE McKINNON GWINN,

Pigeon, Michigan.

